for the grey dress worn by the prisoners. Bare boards were my bed. I was received by my fellow-prisoners with mocking words, and shouts of infernal laughter. On hearing the reason of my imprisonment, they cried out, 'Oh, he is not one of our sort, so everyone will know how to treat him; such people as he must be taught manners here.' There were about seventy prisoners, most of them thieves. Besides ten Jews, four Germans, and many Poles, seventeen women were also crouching on the cold floors of that prison, and a shudder came over me when I learnt that several of these were murderers. All these prisoners conspired together against me. Some food that I had intended for my supper, but which for grief and pain I could not eat, was stolen the first night. Soon after, my necktie was gone. My breakfast consisted in some boiled water, and a pound and a half of bread for the day. For my dinner I got either a little water-gruel or a few potatoes, boiled, without salt. Each day appeared to me like a month. After a week, my wife visited me, with two brethren; they wept when they saw me, and I also could not refrain from shedding tears. I was then taken before the court by a gaoler. Some food that my wife had brought me I was allowed to keep; but, alas, how long? By the next day it had all been stolen from me. I was nigh unto despair; three enemies tormented me—Satan, wicked men, and hunger—and I was also greatly annoyed by vermin. In the midst of all these trials, I again took to my Testament, and put on my armour afresh to combat with my foes. The evil they had done me I returned with services of love, such as sharing my bread with them, &c. The effect of this was, that my food was never again touched, and I gradually gained their love. I heard several of them asking one another, 'What sort of person can this be?' And all who had offended me begged my pardon. My wife sent me some Polish tracts and a Polish Testament; the tracts I distributed among the prisoners, and from the Testament I read to them. Two of the gaolers who borrowed the Testament, liked it so much that they would not give it back again, and I was obliged to see and get some more. I soon succeeded in getting two other German and Polish ones, which I gave to my poor fellow prisoners. The two gaolers were highly delighted to possess such a book, and were very grateful to me for it. From that time one of them supplied me with necessary food, and I got meat and bread almost every day, so that I was no more tormented by hunger. I was very often reminded of the ravens who brought food to Elijah in the desert, and of Daniel, who, even in the lions' den, was strengthened by God. God is still the same now as ever, and in his abundant mercy watcheth over and careth for his people. One prisoner from Prussia, who was chained hand and foot, seemed to be concerned about his soul's salvation. I gave him a German and Polish Testament. To another man, a watchmaker, who was in my cell, I also gave a Testament. I had very serious conversations with the Poles. When they called upon the virgin and all the other saints, I tried to show them from the Word of God that their worship was an entirely false one, and that their prayer would avail them nothing, as neither the holy mother of God nor the saints had the power of answering them. They were all much astonished to hear this; some of them, however, believed it to be true. When I spoke to them of conversion, they said it was utterly impossible to be converted in prison, but as soon as they were made free they would lose no time in seeking their soul's salvation. Some of them entreated me only to swear once, so that they might see at least that I was capable of doing so. Others said, 'It's all very well to lead such a pious life; but who can do it? I could never bear; I *must* swear and lie.' They sometimes secretly played at cards, danced, and smoked; but whenever these culprits were found out they were tied on boards and mercilessly beaten with rods. All the prisoners had a certain portion of work allotted to them. Some were occupied in a spinning factory, among which I was also numbered; others had to cut wood. Twice a week the prison yard had to be cleaned by twenty men. At first I had to go, but it was not for long; after some weeks the gaolers kept me back, saying, 'There are plenty of others who can do the work instead of you.' Before leaving the prison I gave a short farewell address, and asked if I had offended them in any way. There was an unanimous cry of, 'No, never; we have often offended you, but you never hurt us either by word or deed.' I then warned them of the eternal prison awaiting all those who did not repent of their sins and seek forgiveness in the blood of Christ. Several of them looked very sad and seemed much cast down. When I had already left my cell, one of the prisoners, a man of some education, called me back and told me to be sure and let him have a Bible. Two of the gaolers made the same request, so that I shall have to send three Bibles to the Pultusck prison. One of the gaolers took me and the brethren who had come to meet me into his house, where we found his wife had prepared a nice dinner for us. The dear warm-hearted people expressed great joy at my release; during the whole time of my imprisonment they had shown me as much attention as was in their power. May the Lord reward them abundantly! My mental sufferings and the temptations of the evil one were very great in the prison. The tempter tried to make me believe that I had brought these sufferings upon me by my own fault, and that I was not doing the will of God. I felt as if the Lord had cast me away, and dared not tell the brethren of my state of mind, for fear of their doing the same. Oh, it was an awful time, in which the agony of my soul was exceeding great! But now that I am so richly comforted I can see that Satan is indeed a liar from the beginning.

"As to my journey to Russia, I think I

must put it off for a short time: travelling is so dangerous just now, and the cold winter weather very unfavourable. This week I intend going to Warsaw for books, and in the next I hope to go to Kiening,—that vast and, by God, so richly-blest field of labour. Should I still have to remain in Poland, I intend pitching my tent in this neighbourhood, Kiening. It is very desirable that an independent church should be formed in that part of Russia where Brother Kelm resides. What do you think of it? I shall soon send my journal with new intelligence of the work of God here. With love to yourself and all the brethren,

"I am, your humble fellow-labourer,
"J. C. ALF."

DOMESTIC.

NEW ROAD, OXFORD.—A series of services in connection with the jubilee of the New Road Chapel Sunday School Society, Oxford, has been held during the past month. On Sunday, February 7th, the Rev. John Aldis, of Reading, preached two sermons in the chapel, and in the afternoon a children's service was held in the same place of worship. On the Monday evening, the children of the schools connected with the society, including those from Headington, Appleton, and New Osney, partook of tea in the chapel, after which addresses of a suitable and practical character were delivered. On the Tuesday afternoon a large number of persons assembled in Osney-town to witness the ceremony of laying the foundation-stone of a new school in connection with the Baptist denomination. The new school-room will be about thirty feet by twenty-one feet, and will be capable of holding 100 children. The sum required for its erection is about £300. The foundation-stone was laid by Mrs. Bartlett, who has been for many years connected with the society. Short addresses were delivered by the Rev. W. Allen and Sir S. Morton Peto, Bart., M.P. At five o'clock the largest tea-meeting ever held in the city took place in the Corn Exchange. Every part of the capacious edifice was densely crowded, about 800 persons being present to partake of tea. The audience, which was augmented to upwards of 1,000 after tea, included many persons belonging to the various religious denominations in the city, as well as others from the surrounding towns and villages. At the conclusion of the repast, the chair was taken by Sir S. Morton Peto, Bart., M.P., who introduced the proceedings in an admirable and most appropriate address. Addresses were also delivered by the Revs. N. Haycroft, M.A., C. Vince, W. Allen, G. Warner, and by E. B. Underhill, Esq. In the course of the proceedings, Mr. Allen stated that the church at Oxford had been honoured in the past by many of its members having been called to the ministry, among whom he mentioned the Rev. J. H. Hinton, M.A., Dr. Steane, Dr. Draper, S. Pearce, F. Franklin, T. F. Newman, J. Mathews, W. Teall, W. Bull, B.A., and W. D. Elliston.

BRIERLEY HILL, STAFFORDSHIRE.—Twelve months ago £300 lent on the above chapel was called in under peculiar circumstances, the money to be peremptorily paid on February 2nd, 1864. The members of the church and congregation immediately met to devise means to secure the amount. It was decided to hold a bazaar in the month of August, 1863, and to take up in shares the amount unrealised by the bazaar. The bazaar was taken up with great spirit, and owing to the numerous contributions, and the liberality displayed on the days of the sale, the net sum realised was £120. At a meeting held on February 16th, 1863, the shares necessary to secure the remainder of the money were cheerfully taken up by friends connected with the place. Wednesday, January 27th, 1864, was the day fixed for the payment of the shares, and owing to the faithfulness of the shareholders the whole amount was obtained. On Monday evening, February 1st, a public tea-meeting was held to celebrate the event. At half-past six o'clock the public meeting took place, under the presidency of P. Harris, Esq. The chairman opened the meeting with a suitable and cathetic speech. G. Thorne, Esq., the laborious and successful minister of the place, was first called upon to give the history of the church for the last three years, and to read the financial statement. In the midst of Mr. Thorne's address, the gentleman holding the bond for £300 appeared upon the platform, and in the presence of the whole assembly the money was paid and the bond cancelled, amid clapping of hands and other demonstrations of delight; at the same time, increasing the pleasure, £50 raised on a note of hand was also paid. The meeting was subsequently addressed by the Rev. A. Macdonald, T. Richards, B. Bird, and other friends.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES.—On Thursday, January 14th, this new and elegant edifice, of which the foundation-stone was laid in July last, was opened for public worship. The chapel will seat 760, or with the addition of the school-rooms, which communicate with sliding shutters, more than 1,000 persons. The whole of the buildings and arrangements have commanded universal admiration. The Rev.

W. Brock, of Bloomsbury, preached on Thursday, January 14th, at noon; and the Rev. W. Landels, of Regent's Park, in the evening. Both sermons were very powerful, and specially applicable to the event. Between the services dinner was served to the numerous company in the Town Hall, and tea in the school-room, to about 300 persons. On Sunday, January 17th, the services were continued, when the Rev. Dr. Angus, President of Regent's Park College, preached in the morning; the Rev. W. Collings, of Gloucester, in the afternoon; and the Rev. Henry Bayley, pastor of the church, in the evening. On Tuesday, January 19th, a public meeting was held in the chapel, W. Olney, Esq., of London, in the chair. The Revs. W. G. Lewis, of Bayswater; J. E. Giles, of Clapham; W. Collings, L. H. Byrnes, and A. Mackennal, of Kingston; and W. Higgs and J. Stiff, Esqs., addressed the meeting. On Thursday, January 21st, the Rev. Thomas Jones, of Bedford chapel, preached. At every service the congregations were very large. From the report read by the secretary, J. East, Esq., it appears that the total cost of the chapel, school-rooms, &c., is £2,750. Of this the builder, W. Higgs, Esq., generously gives £250, reducing the amount to £2,500. Of this sum about half has been raised, exclusive of promises. The collections and donations at the opening services amounted to £123 8s.

LOWER EDMONTON, MIDDLESEX.—Recognition services were held here on Tuesday, January 26th, in connection with the settlement, as pastor, of the Rev. D. Russell, from the Metropolitan Tabernacle College. The afternoon service was commenced by the Rev. S. Kennedy, of Tottenham, giving out a hymn, reading a chapter, and praying for the Divine blessing to accompany the day's services. The Rev. G. Rogers (theological tutor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle College) then gave a very impressive charge to the pastor. At the conclusion of this address, prayer was again offered by the Rev. S. J. Smith, of Enfield. The charge to the church was then given by the Rev. J. Edwards (their late pastor) from the words of the apostle in Hebrews xiii. 17. The service was concluded with prayer by Mr. Edwards. A large number then adjourned to the school-room to partake of dinner. In the evening a public meeting was held, when most of the neighbouring ministers were present. The chair was occupied by the pastor, who opened the meeting with a few appropriate remarks; and then earnest and suitable addresses were given by the Revs. R. Wallace, Tottenham; J. Chalmers, Tottenham; G. Rogers, J. Edwards, J. Jackson, W. M. Robinson, and J. Ward.

DAWLEY BANK, SHROPSHIRE.—On Monday, January 18th, an interesting meeting was held in the school-room of the Baptist chapel, Dawley Bank, for the purpose of presenting Mr. Skemp, the late minister, with a purse of gold, as a testimonial of esteem, and a mark of sympathy with him in the affliction which has caused his retirement from the ministry. The church had been assisted in their effort by liberal contributions from Cheltenham, Bilston, and other places. As some of the collectors had not paid in their money, the full amount could not be stated, but upwards of £60 had been received by the treasurer. Addresses having been delivered by Mr. Lovatt (Bilston), Mr. James Jones, jun. (Dawley Bank), and Mr. Clayton (Dawley Green), the chairman presented Mr. Skemp with the purse, and made some appropriate remarks. Mr. Skemp, in the kindest manner, acknowledged the gift. The Rev. J. Smith, of Pontesbury, then addressed the church. After singing and prayer, the meeting separated.

BRIXTON HILL, LONDON.—On Thursday evening, January 21st, a special service was held in New Park Road Chapel, Brixton, for the recognition of the Rev. D. Jones, B.A. (late of Folkestone), as minister of the church and congregation. The interesting occasion drew together a large number of Christian friends from various parts of the metropolis, so that the body of the chapel was full to overflowing. The chair was taken by W. H. Millar, Esq., senior deacon of the church, who, in his opening remarks, gave an interesting account of the origin and progress of the church at Brixton Hill. Prayers were offered by the Revs. S. Eldridge and I. M. Soule. Appropriate addresses were delivered by the Revs. J. Offord, J. Spence, D.D., W. M. Anderson, and W. H. Watson, Esq. After a few words from the recently-chosen pastor, who appears to be entering on his new sphere of labour with encouraging prospects, the meeting was brought to a conclusion.

ABERDEEN.—A social meeting of the members and friends connected with the John Street Baptist church of this city was held in the Music Hall Buildings on the evening of Tuesday, January 20th, when the ministers of the other Baptist churches in Aberdeen, along with those of various Independent and Presbyterian congregations, and a large number of friends, met to welcome the Rev. Stephen J. Davis, who has lately entered upon the

pastorate of the church. Between 200 and 300 sat down to tea, after which addresses were given by the various ministers present. The meeting was a most encouraging one, and the spirit of the remarks made by various brethren in the ministry augurs well for Mr. Davis's prospects of usefulness here, and also assured him of their earnest desire to co-operate with him in all departments of Christian labour.

CRADLEY, WORCESTERSHIRE.—A social tea-meeting was held on Monday, January 25th, in the Refuge Baptist chapel, Cradley, the church and congregation feeling a desire to express their sympathy with the widow of their late beloved pastor, the Rev. J. Sneath. About 300 persons sat down to tea, after which Mr. J. D. Rodway, of Coseley, having supplied the vacant pulpit for the three previous Sabbaths, was called to the chair. After a prayer and a touching address by the chairman, the meeting was addressed by Messrs. Bennett, Priestly, Stringer, Woodhouse, Worton, Fellows, Forest, and the Rev. Mr. Bruel. The various speakers, being chiefly members of the church, made many touching allusions to their late minister, and a feeling of sympathy for the bereaved family pervaded the meeting. The proceeds of the tea (about £10) have been handed over to the widow.

GRANTHAM.—The opening services of the first Baptist chapel erected in Grantham were commenced on Thursday, January 21st. The chapel is a very neat building, capable of seating about 300 persons, and has every convenience for congregations and Sunday school scholars. On the opening day two very eloquent sermons were preached by the Rev. Henry Dowson, of Bradford. At five o'clock a tea party was held in the Exchange Hall, High Street, when about 350 persons sat down to tea. On Sunday, January 24th, two sermons were preached by the Rev. Henry Watts, of Golcar, near Huddersfield. The opening services were concluded on the following Sabbath, when two sermons were preached by the Rev. J. Morton, of Collingham. These services realised altogether about £25.

FOLKESTONE.—On Thursday, February 4th, a meeting was held in the Town Hall, Folkestone, for the purpose of presenting a testimonial to the Rev. D. Jones, B.A., Baptist minister, who has just left this town. The mayor, C. Doridant, Esq., occupied the chair, and there were several of Mr. Jones's personal friends and members of his congregation present. The mayor, after appropriate remarks, handed to Mr. Jones a handsome gold watch, bearing the following inscription on the case:—"Presented, with a purse of twenty-five sovereigns, by the church and congregation of Salem Chapel, and the inhabitants of the town, to the Rev. D. Jones, B.A., on his leaving Folkestone. Jan. 26th, 1864." Mr. Jones suitably acknowledged the gift.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.—The corner-stone of a new Baptist chapel, at Ryehill, for the congregation of which the Rev. Wildon Carr is pastor, was laid on the 19th of January, with the usual formalities. It will be of an ornate Italian style of architecture, and will consist both of a chapel and school-room, the former accommodating about 1,500 worshippers, and the latter about 900 children. The estimated cost of the building is £3,400. The site has cost £870, making a total of £4,270, towards which funds have been realised or promised amounting to £2,120, leaving £2,150 yet to be raised. Most of the Dissenting ministers of the town took part in the services of the day.

SARN, MONTGOMERYSHIRE.—A public meeting was held, February 8th, at this place, for the purpose of presenting the Rev. E. Owens, the late minister, with a splendidly-wrought purse, containing the sum of £16, as a token of the church and congregation's sincere appreciation of his services during the last ten years. The chair was taken by the Rev. Mr. Adams (Independent minister), Newtown. The purse was made, and presented in behalf of the church, by Miss Davies, of Snowfield. Mr. Owens, Mr. Pascoe, Mr. Williams (Mr. Owens' successor), and others, addressed the meeting.

CROSS STREET CHAPEL, ISLINGTON.—The congregation and friends of this church have in little more than a month raised the sum of £300 6s. as a testimonial to their late pastor, the Rev. A. C. Thomas. This gift, which was presented to Mr. Thomas on the 4th of February, testifies to the esteem and affection in which he is held, as well as to the sympathy felt towards him in his affliction; and when it is considered that nearly 500 members have been received into the church during the eight years of his ministry, it may also be looked upon as an expression of gratitude for his indefatigable and self-denying labours.

MINISTERIAL CHANGES.—The Rev. J. J. Williams, late of Fakenham, has accepted a unanimous invitation to the pastorate of the church at Nayland, Suffolk. —The Rev. E. Le Fevre intends shortly to resign his pastoral charge with the Baptist church at Woodstock, Oxon, and is now open to an invitation to supply

vacant churches. Present address, "E. Le Fevre, Woodstock, Oxon."—The Rev. D. B. Joseph, of Cupar Fife, has received a cordial and unanimous invitation from the Baptist church meeting at Salem chapel, Burton-on-Trent, and intends to begin his labours there on the first Sabbath in March.—The Rev. J. Aldis, jun., late of Lowestoft, has accepted the unanimous invitation to the pastorate of the church, West Lane, Haworth, Yorkshire.—The Rev. William Cheetham has resigned the pastorate of the Baptist church, New Mill, Tring, Herts.—The Rev. Joseph Hurlstone having resigned the pastorate of the Baptist church, Penknap, Westbury, Wilts (after labouring there nearly nine years), has accepted the earnest and cordial invitation of the church at Castle Street, Calne, Wilts, and intends to commence his labours there on the first Lord's-day in March.—The Rev. J. E. Cracknell has resigned the pastorate at Blackheath, and has accepted an invitation to the pastorate of the church meeting at Cambray chapel, Cheltenham, the scene of the labours of the late Rev. James Smith.—The Rev. B. Williams has resigned the pastorate of the Baptist church, at Zion chapel, St. Clears, and has accepted the cordial invitation of the church at the Tabernacle, Pembrey, in the same county of Carmarthen. He commenced his labours on Lord's day, the 7th of February.—The Rev. J. H. Blake has accepted the pastorate of the church at Bow, and entered on his duties with most pleasing prospects of usefulness. Mr. Blake will still retain his connection with the Baptist Building Fund.—The Rev. G. Malins, of the Metropolitan Tabernacle College, having supplied the pulpit for the last few months, has accepted the cordial and unanimous call of the church meeting in Shaftesbury Hall, Aldersgate Street, to become its pastor, and as such commenced his labours on Lord's day, February 14th.

GENERAL.

PROPOSED RE-PUBLICATION OF THE WORKS OF THE REV. J. H. HINTON, M.A.—Many of our readers must have noticed the advertisement which has appeared in our pages, announcing the proposed publication of the Works of the Rev. J. H. Hinton, in a uniform edition. The proposal is one that cannot fail to interest all who are acquainted with Mr. Hinton's writings, and we sincerely hope that his life and health will be spared so as to enable him to complete this "last gift to the churches." For the sake of those who have not seen the advertisement, we may mention that the new edition will consist of six handsome volumes. These six volumes will contain the whole of Mr. Hinton's theological writings. In addition to his principal Works—"Theology"; "The Work of the Spirit"; "The Harmony of Religious Truth and Human Reason"; "Responsibility"; "Inspiration"; "Individual Effort and the Active Christian"; "Athanasia"; "Lectures on Acquaintance with God," on "God's Government of Man," and on "Redemption"; and the "Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans,"—will be found all his minor publications also—"The Use and Abuse of Prayer"; "Christian Sympathy"; Funeral and other Sermons; Controversial Tracts; Ecclesiastical Tracts, &c., &c.; together with a selection of papers contributed to various periodicals. The whole will be carefully edited and revised. The first volume will be put to press as early as possible, and the successive volumes will be published quarterly. The subscription for the whole will be a guinea and a half, which, we are informed, may be paid in one sum, or in three instalments, according to the convenience of the subscriber. We believe that Mr. Hinton has already received the names of a considerable number of subscribers, but not yet sufficient to justify him in proceeding. We have no doubt that this announcement will be all that is needed to induce many of our readers to send him their names at once.

ANOTHER BURIAL CASE.—A scene, the like of which has not occurred for many a year, might have been witnessed on the 3rd ult. in the grounds of the parish church, Burton-on-Trent. One of the curates having refused to bury a child, upon the ground of its being unbaptized, the parents at once sought counsel from the Rev. R. Kenney (Baptist), and the Rev. G. Kettle (Independent), as to what they could do by way of affording an appropriate religious service on the occasion. An eligible site, therefore, was chosen for the grave, and the funeral took place at half-past three o'clock. As it would have been illegal for the gentlemen already named to have officiated within the walls of the ground, they took their stand outside the walls and as near the grave as possible—a low wall, surmounted with iron railings, being between them and the grave. The intervening distance was about ten yards, so that the mourners could have the full benefit of the ministrations conducted in this novel manner. The service was simple and impressive, and performed in the presence of other people beside the mourners who had come to witness it. The ceremony was conducted in the most orderly and quiet

manner, and had it not been for one circumstance, would have been highly satisfactory to all concerned. The person who fills the dignified office of saying "Amen" in the parish church, insisted that the sexton should fill up the grave immediately the coffin had been deposited in it. Whether he acted thus by order or not is unknown, but it is a fact that while the service was being performed, the sexton was engaged in this part of his duty.

REGISTRARS' MARRIAGES AND REMARRIAGE AT CHURCH.—One of the curates of St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, has had the enclosed correspondence with the Registrar-General's Office respecting the solemnisation of marriage in the church of persons already married at a registrar's office:—"42, Chapel Street, Belgrave Square, S.W., December 16th, 1863.—Sir,—I shall feel obliged if you will give me the information required on the following points:—1. The form for publishing banns of marriage in church where persons have been married by a registrar in the country, and wish to be married in church, or the reference where such form can be found. 2. Or should the marriage take place without the banns being published, upon the certificate of the banns of the registrar being supplied? 3. In case such marriage took place in church, what is the form of entry in the parish register-book? 4. Have the parties to sign some form stating that they have been married by a registrar?—I am, Sir, your obedient servant, FRANCIS BROTHERS, Curate of St. Paul's, Knightsbridge.—The Registrar-General." "General Register Office, December 18th, 1863.—Rev. Sir,—I am directed by the Registrar-General to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday's date, and to inform you that clause 12 of the Act 19 and 20 Vic., cap. 119, contains provisions to the following effect:—If parties who have been married in a register-office desire to add the religious ceremony ordered or used by the church or persuasion to which they belong to the marriage so contracted, they may present themselves for that purpose to the clergyman or minister of the church or persuasion of which they are members, and such clergyman or minister may, if he think fit, upon the production of their certificate of marriage before the superintendent-registrar, and upon payment of the customary fees (if any), read or celebrate the marriage service, but it is expressly enjoined that such reading or celebration shall not be entered as a marriage in the parish register. A marriage in a register-office is a perfectly legal and valid marriage; and no provision beyond that I have just quoted has been made by the legislature for a subsequent remarriage in a church or chapel.—I am, Rev. Sir, your obedient servant, E. EDWARDS, Chief Clerk.—The Rev. Francis Brothers." "42, Chapel Street, Belgrave Square, S.W., December 18th, 1863.—Sir,—I beg to thank you for the very prompt and explicit answer to the questions which I asked on the 16th inst. I shall feel further obliged to you if you will kindly tell me whether, after the marriage in the church has been solemnised between two persons previously married by a registrar, there would be any objection to the fact of such marriage in the church being endorsed on the certificate of the registrar produced by the persons so married.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant, FRANCIS BROTHERS, Curate of St. Paul's, Knightsbridge.—The Registrar-General." "General Register Office, December 21st, 1863.—Rev. Sir,—In reply to your letter of the 18th inst. (received this day), I am directed by the Registrar-General to inform you that in his opinion no record whatever should be made of the reading or celebration of the marriage ceremony in a church after the marriage has been legally solemnised in a register-office.—I am, Rev. Sir, your obedient servant, E. EDWARDS, Chief Clerk.—The Rev. Francis Brothers."

THE TRIAL OF BISHOP COLENSO.—Bishop Colenso's trial at the Cape was concluded on the 16th of December. The presenting clergy accused Bishop Colenso of heresy on nine counts. The suffragan bishops found him guilty on all the nine. The metropolitan agreed in that opinion, and sentenced Bishop Colenso to be deprived of his see and all his rights of office therein. The defendant not being present to hear the judgment pronounced against him, the metropolitan gave him until the 4th of March to file in London a full, unconditional, and absolute retractation, in writing, of all the heretical extracts referred to in the counts, or otherwise to the 16th of April to file a like retractation in Cape Town. On Bishop Colenso so complying the sentence becomes null and void. Dr. Bleek protested against the proceedings and the validity of the judgment, and gave notice of appeal.

OBITUARY.

DEATH OF THE REV. JOSEPH HARBOTTLE.—We deeply regret to announce the death of the Rev. Joseph Harbottle, of Accrington, which took place on the 19th of January, at the age of 65 years. Mr. Harbottle was, for several years, the President of the Baptist College at Accrington, and both in that position, and

since his retirement from it, he was highly and deservedly esteemed and beloved. His last sermon was preached in Barnes Street chapel, Accrington, on Lord's day evening, January 10th, from those important words, "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."—Heb. x. 14. Those who were privileged to hear that earnest, impressive discourse, will never forget it. The doctrine of that passage was the law and guide of his ministerial life. Whatever changes occurred around, he stood to that doctrine as firmly as a Paul or a Luther. The preliminary funereal services took place at Accrington, on the 26th of January. At an early hour in the morning anxious groups might be seen wending their way to the chapel in Barnes Street. The place was well filled by the time fixed for the commencement of the services, and at eight o'clock the corpse arrived at the chapel, followed by the relatives of the deceased and a large number of ministers and friends from the neighbouring towns. The service commenced by singing the hymn beginning,—

"In vain the fancy strives to paint
The moment after death,"

—which was given out by the Rev. J. Harvey, of Leigh. The Rev. J. Smith, of Bacup, read the Scriptures, and the Rev. J. Howe, of Waterbarn, offered prayer. Another hymn was then sung, after which an address was delivered by the Rev. Peter Scott, of Brierley, near Halifax, Mr. Harbottle's oldest friend in the ministry. A portion of another hymn was then sung, after which Mr. Scott concluded the service by pronouncing the benediction. The procession then formed, and left the chapel in the following order:—First, the ministers, who had come to pay the last tribute of affection to their venerable friend, several of them having studied for the ministry in the academy of which Mr. Harbottle was classical tutor; after them the friends who had been invited to attend the mournful ceremonies; next the coffin, borne by four members of the church at Barnes Street, over which Mr. Harbottle had presided. These were relieved by four members of the church at Oswaldtwistle, of which he was formerly pastor. The Rev. W. Jackson, of Church, and his two sons, followed immediately after the body, being the only relatives of Mr. Harbottle residing in the neighbourhood. Then came the general procession, composed of almost every class, and all denominations of Christians. The streets from the chapel to the railway station were lined with crowds of anxious spectators, while nearly all the shops on the line of route were closed in token of respect to one who, though he had throughout the whole of his life been modest and retiring almost to a fault, had won the respect and esteem of all who were acquainted with him. The procession arrived at the railway station at twenty minutes to ten o'clock, from which the body was conveyed directly afterwards to Ulverton for Tottlebank, accompanied by the Rev. P. Scott, Mr. Jackson, and Mr. R. Fish. On the following day, the 27th, the funeral ceremonies took place at the Baptist burial ground, Tottlebank, which is a quiet retired spot. About twenty friends had been invited to accompany the remains to its last resting place. The Rev. T. Taylor officiated in the chapel, and the Rev. P. Scott at the grave. The sorrow manifested both at Accrington, Tottlebank, and indeed wherever Mr. Harbottle was known, appears to have been almost universal.

Editorial Notes for the Month.

The black war-cloud which hung over the Continent when our last number was issued from the press, has burst during the past month over the head of the King of Denmark. The brave king and his brave people—brave, though few—have been overrun by the motley hordes of Austria and Prussia; and now the whole of the Duchy of Sleswig, excepting only one small portion of it, is in the hands, and under the control, of the great German powers. The question that now arises is, What will they do with it?—for the two royal marauders are in the awkward position, of having taken that by violence, which would have been readily conceded to reasoning and remonstrance; and it is too much to be feared that they will seek to

justify past excesses, which all Europe deems unjustifiable, by rushing into further wrong-doing. If this should be indeed so, the danger of a general European war remains; and in that event scarcely any one ventures to hope that England will keep from mingling in the fray; though up to the present time the Government seems to have acted with both firmness and moderation, and to have done all that was possible in the interests of peace.

Meantime, Parliament has opened, and matters connected with Home Politics have attracted some of the attention that was being too fixedly given to affairs abroad. After all, England is more important to Englishmen than even Denmark or America; and it is not well when we think so much of our neighbours' business as to forget or neglect our own. We wish, indeed, that there were more disposition in Englishmen to look to their own affairs. That political indifferentism, which is almost the greatest curse that can come upon a nation, still reigns. At present the thirty-nine articles of our political creed resolve themselves into one word —PALMERSTON.

However quiet the political atmosphere may be, the Ecclesiastical barometer is seriously disturbed. "Essays and Reviews" have been relieved from condemnation by the highest Civil Court of the Realm; and, conversely, Bishop Colenso—he of the "Pentateuch"—has been condemned by his metropolitan, and sentenced to deposition. The decision in the former case has excited both regret and alarm, especially among Evangelical Churchmen; and the alarm is not lessened by the fact, which seems only too obvious, that the principle on which the decision in favour of the Essayists rests must ultimately relieve the Bishop also. What shall be said of such a state of things?

Our own "denominational politics" are attracting unusual attention. A grave question is being gravely discussed,—whether it would not be better to unite in some way our Home and Irish Societies. Dr. ANGUS, in the columns of *The Freeman*, has advocated the union of both organizations under the name of a "British Mission." The financial difficulties of the Baptist Missionary Society, also, have raised the question respecting that Society,—whether some plan might not and ought not to be adopted, to bring it into *closer and more direct* connexion with the churches throughout the land. Both these matters will doubtless come up for discussion at the approaching Annual Meetings, when, may "the Spirit of Wisdom and of a sound mind" be given to the assembled brethren. Meantime, we rejoice to know that the financial difficulties of the Baptist Missionary Society are being materially lessened through the efforts of the churches; though it must be added, on the other hand, with much regret, that the incomes of the smaller societies are being seriously affected by the attention that is being given to the larger one.

THE

BAPTIST REPORTER.

APRIL, 1864.

OUR ANNUAL MEETINGS.

April has come round again, bringing with it the accustomed series of denominational anniversaries,—the Feast of Tabernacles of our Baptist Israel. Our readers will look for a few words from us which may help them to turn the occasion to some profitable account; and, although it is well nigh hopeless to dream of saying anything on such a subject which has not been said a thousand times before, we cannot persuade ourselves to let this number of *The Reporter* go forth without some proof of our remembrance of the season which has recurred, and of our unflagging interest in those great spiritual enterprises whose conductors this month "take stock" of their present position, and of the fruits accruing from the labours and expenditure of another year. In the impossibility of saying anything new, we shall have done something worth doing if we can stir up our readers' minds by way of remembrance of the great principles which should underlie and actuate all our religious activities, and of the spirit in which those activities can alone be prosecuted acceptably and successfully.

One thought, we are pretty sure, will stir in the heart, and very likely spring to the lip, of each one whose eye rests upon this page:—"April here again! How swiftly the year has fled"! And truly it is so. The echo of the voice of last year's speakers and preachers seems scarcely to have died away, before those appointed to the same work at this anniversary are called upon to take up the argument and renew the appeal. The decisions which resulted from the deliberations of last April have hardly been fairly carried out, before the time has come for rendering account of their working, and confirming or modifying them as experience may suggest. Officers and committee, ministers, deacons, and members, have but just buckled to at the new year's work, when lo! the year is gone, and we must again sum up the results of the past, and start afresh for the future. It were something, and not a little, towards the better doing of our work, if we would lay more practically to heart the old old lesson thus newly pressed upon our heed; if we could remember it, not only now and then, but every day and all day long. Our activity would be steadier and therefore stronger, less spasmodic and therefore less ineffective, if we bore in mind how silently and swiftly, hour by hour, minute by minute, our working-day of life is trickling away; if we girded ourselves each morning for the

duties of that day in the spirit of Him "whose we are and whom we serve." "I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work."

But to come more directly to our subject. If we believe the representations of many writers and talkers now-a-days, the time has passed when "our annual meetings" had any real value or power about them. They are now little better than effete and worthless forms,—the ghosts and relics of dead realities. The force of the arguments and appeals of missionary platforms spent itself when their novelty ceased. The names and examples of the mighty and holy dead have lost their power over the hearts and lives of the living. The new times require new modes of operation, new ways of enlisting the sympathy and help of Christians for the great evangelical enterprises of the church. Now let us once for all proclaim our utter disbelief and reprobation of all this style of thought and speech. It is arrogant, egotistic, and shallow. It carries the air of superior wisdom, but is false to the simplest facts and principles of human nature. It ignores the plain homely fact of the succession of the generations, and that arguments which are old to us are new and necessary to our children. It overlooks the imperishable interest and moment of the themes with which these arguments deal. It forgets the practical forgetfulness of our hearts about the things we most simply and assuredly accept as true. It treats with coarse and unfilial irreverence the memory of departed excellence. We know full well, indeed, that the mightest and holiest names have no power to charm us, unless there be in us a living sympathy with the motives and spirit of the men who bore those names. But so long as men are men, and so long as the Bible is, to so large an extent, a book of biography, so long shall we cling to the assurance that the rehearsal of the deeds of the Christian heroes of the past, is one of God's mightest means for kindling and guiding a holy emulation of their heroism in us who survive; of inspiring us to follow their faith, to enter into their labours, and to aspire after their reward.

But while we speak thus that there may be no misunderstanding of our after-words, we cannot but admit, and we believe most thoughtful observers of the signs of the times will unite in the admission, that the kind of remark against which we protest is, after all, only an exaggerated way of representing a state of things which does actually obtain amongst us. That the substantial attachment of our churches to the great evangelical enterprises which these meetings represent is not dwindling, is being triumphantly attested by the response to the appeal for special aid to the Baptist Missionary Society. But are we wrong in our conviction that our efforts in the cause of Christ lack something of the glow and enthusiasm which marked those of our fathers; that we come short of the simplicity of their faith and the ardour of their love? Are we not apt to do our work after too formal and perfunctory a fashion? Is it so, that with the novelty of the missionary enterprise, its romance and charm have for us faded? Have we grown so used to hear and read and talk about the crying need of perishing men, and the imperative duty of sending the Gospel to them, that these solemn, awful thoughts have lost their impres-

siveness to us,—become little more than forms of speech,—articles in a cold creed rather than parts of a warm, earnest, living faith? We fear there are symptoms which shew that such a condition of feeling is creeping over us; and woe betide our Christian life and work if the palsy be suffered to gain head and prevail!

Now one end, nay, to our thinking, the chief end, of "our annual meetings" should be to prevent such a calamity as this, by counterworking the tendency out of which the danger of the calamity springs. Their aim should be to rouse and sustain and direct to practical results a sacred enthusiasm for the glory of Christ and the salvation of men; to press home to the conscience and the heart the old, yet ever new, facts and arguments which sustain the claim of the Redeemer's cause upon us. Our general public meetings are not for deliberation, nor, we think, mainly for the giving of detailed information as to the working of the societies they are designed to aid. They miss their aim just in as far as they fail to send their attendants away with their spirits stirred anew within them at the sight of a world lying in the arms of the wicked one; with their hearts throbbing in closer sympathy with the yearning compassion and redeeming love of Jesus; and with their souls braced to higher and holier resolution to do what God shall give them strength to do, to turn dying sinners from the error of their ways. The more simply preachers, speakers, hearers, set this object before them, the more profitable are our meetings likely to be. We need a simpler faith in the power of spiritual agencies. There is reason to fear lest, in all our work for Christ, we come to trust in mechanism rather than in life. This is a day of organization; and the very elaborateness and efficiency of our machinery may betray us. Let us beware of this, one of the subtlest and most easily-besetting forms of the ruinous error of trusting in an arm of flesh. Wise improvements in constitution and modes of working are to be welcomed and encouraged. But let us not look for the working of spiritual wonders by such means. Life, life quickened and sustained by the Spirit of God,—this is what we want, what we should strive and pray for more. Where this is found it will find its own methods of working, and will work more effectually by simple means than the most carefully-adjusted machinery when this is absent or feeble.

If we are to have more life we must have more prayer. The series of meetings most fitly opens with a prayer-meeting. This is often one of the most interesting and profitable meetings of all. But we have been often pained to see how partially it is sustained by the presence of members and ministers of our London churches. We leave the hint to those whom it may concern. The exercise of prayer might also be more largely introduced into our meetings for deliberation. It would serve to keep us in mind of the solemn object for which we meet, and of our dependence on God for wisdom to decide aright on the questions which come before us. It would prevent discussion degenerating into dispute; and would bring down the blessing of Heaven upon our intercourse. But especially let us urge that separate churches and individual Christians should seek from God a blessing on these anniversaries. We fear that our metropolitan churches do not take as much interest in the matter as they ought. We

have ourselves heard announcements in London chapels of meetings for business or worship, or singing-practice, on the very evenings fixed for some of "our annual meetings." This is not right. The pastors and members of our churches in London should feel it to be their first duty at that season to do all they can to render the meetings as effective as possible. And let not our country churches think themselves free from responsibility in the matter. Where no members, nor even the minister, can attend, let the subject be remembered, in public and in private, at the throne of grace. We commend these simple suggestions to the serious attention of our brethren. The present year is in some respects a critical one in the history of more than one of our societies. The opportunity is favourable for trying to throw more life, more energy and enthusiasm into our assemblies, and into the work which they prompt and encourage. Rightly used, the present season may become the beginning of swifter progress for the time to come. Be it ours to bring more prayerfulness, more love, more personal consecration to the work of the Lord, assured that if we thus "prove him," he will "open the windows of heaven and pour us out a blessing, that there shall not be room to contain it."

THE ROYAL CHRISTENING.

The assembly packed within the narrow walls of the private chapel of Buckingham Palace, on Thursday, March 10th, was as numerous as it was brilliant. At least a score royal personages were present, nearly all the Cabinet Ministers, some half-dozen foreign ambassadors and representatives, seven dignitaries of the Established Church, the members of the royal households, besides many persons of high rank and illustrious name. It was not merely a royal pageant in which they took part, but a religious ceremony. And it is just in this last aspect of it that we recall the royal christening with the least satisfaction. All the crowned heads of Christendom can never make that to be good which history, and our own observation, to go no further, have emphatically pronounced to be evil, only evil, and evil continually. These may seem strong words to timid men; but recollecting the fearful consequences to the church of Christ which have sprung from the substitution of human rites for divine ordinances, we should be traitors to our own convictions if they were not uttered. It cannot be otherwise than evil in any measure to lessen men's regard for the authority of Christ in his church, and to undervalue, if not altogether to deny, that the Scriptures are our only rule of faith and practice; and yet, unless we have totally misread church history, this is only a very small part of the mischief which has issued from the adoption of the ceremony under condemnation.

The royal christening will recall to our readers the fact, that the modern mode of celebrating the rite in the Episcopal Church is to be dated no farther back than the reign of James I. Previous to that time christening was generally performed by immersion, as the size of the ancient fonts, the ancient pictures of the ceremony still extant, the decrees of many of the provincial councils in this country enforcing the primitive mode, and the *Catechisms* of Archbishop Cranmer, abundantly testify. "What greater shame can there be," says Cranmer, "than that a man professe himself to be a Christen man because he is baptized, and yet he knoweth not what baptism is, nor what strength the same hath, *nor what the dyppynge in the water doth betoken?*" The substitution of

sprinkling for dipping was adopted by the French clergy as early as the eighth century, and was perpetuated by the Reformers. Scotland received it from Geneva, and to that solemn pedant, James I., belongs the honour of making it popular among the clergy of the Established Church of England. The choice of dipping or pouring, which is still given to "the priest" in the Book of Common Prayer, has ended, as every one knows, in the very general use of neither.

We cannot forget, moreover, that the theory of the sponsorship of the Anglican Church virtually concedes our opinions as to the prerequisites of baptism. The Puritans, in the reign of Charles II., perfectly understood this fact; and hence in their *Exceptions to the Book of Common Prayer*, published in 1662, they say: "We know not by what right the sureties do promise and answer in the name of the infant; *it seemeth to us also to countenance the Anabaptistical opinion of the necessity of an actual profession of faith and repentance in order to baptism.*"

We are indebted for our information respecting the royal christening to the *Court Circular;* and the accuracy of its report will not be questioned. We learn from this, among other things, that "the font was a beautifully-formed tazza* of silver gilt, the rim representing the leaves and flowers of the water-lily, while the base, from which springs its graceful stem, is grouped with cherubs playing the lyre." Altogether a very tasteful and elegant thing, as will thus appear, and one that Robert Robinson would have classified as a "fancy font." We also learn, that "over the altar was a fine piece of tapestry, representing the baptism of the Saviour." How would both pictures look together; the one on the wall, and the other within the rails of "the sanctuary"? Would they mutually explain and illustrate each other? We trow not. No picture of the baptism of our Lord, modern or mediæval, ever ventured so far to violate the plain testimony of the New Testament as to depict the Saviour being handed to John the Baptist as a babe.

But the ceremony itself was not all of a piece. One part scarcely agreed with another. The opening chorale and the closing thanksgiving were at variance. The words of the chorale ran as follows:—

"Praise the Lord with heart and voice,
Through the land let all rejoice,
While our Prince's new-born heir
To the holy font we bear.

"From the dawn of early youth
May he walk in faith and truth:
Bless, O Lord, this holy scene,
Bless our Princess, Prince, and Queen!"

To this last verse we can most heartily say Amen. But there is in the first two lines of it a pious wish expressed that the young prince may walk in faith and truth from his earliest years. How does the closing thanksgiving read? "We yield Thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased Thee to regenerate this infant with Thy Holy Spirit, to receive him for Thine own child by adoption, and to incorporate him into Thy church." Now, one of two things is true: either the primate, and all those taking part in the royal christening, believed that regeneration would be associated inseparably with the performance of the rite; or they did not. If they did, then the expression beforehand of any wish implying uncertainty as to the choice the infant prince would hereafter make was obviously in contradiction. If they did not, then the thanksgiving with which the ceremony closed—we must not hesitate to say it—was insincere.

* "*Cup.*"

Another thing about the royal christening which struck us as strange, was the number of sponsors, eight in all,—five of these were represented by proxies,—and the distance they will mostly reside from the young prince whom they have thus undertaken morally to superintend. If the sponsors are to do their work effectively, they will need much closer and more protracted intercourse with their charge than it is certain any two of them will enjoy. It is not very usual to hear that the sponsors fill out their own selected office with anything approaching in the least degree to its grave responsibilities. Will these eight sponsors prove an exception? or will they not rather forget all about their promise, as so many before them have done, and thus give point to the sarcasm, that the form is everything, and the reality nothing!

We have touched very reluctantly on these things: but fidelity to our principles as a denomination demanded that, in any reference which might be made in these pages to the royal christening, the points we have briefly passed under review should not be omitted.

There are other aspects of the principal court event of last month which yield us far more satisfaction than those on which we have hitherto written. While we cannot accept the royal christening as Christian baptism, we are none the less loyal to the sovereign of these realms; and we, therefore, unfeignedly rejoice that, by another heir to the British throne, Heaven is graciously securing the undisturbed reign of the house of Brunswick, not only during this, but, in all human probability, during two succeeding generations. We have no wish for the return of wars of succession. We have no love for changes of dynasty, which rarely take place without many changes for the worse. And the people of the British isles would think the end of their days was come if they had to endure the social uproar associated too frequently with the periodical election of the chief magistrates of modern republics. The liberty of Englishmen was never greater than at the present moment; and the power of the monarch is so constitutionally checked and guarded, that the off-hand tyranny of the Tudors, or the miserable despotism of the Stuarts, is simply impossible. Only let the people of these isles be true to themselves, and their liberties, under the present sovereign and her successors, will be still further increased.

One great difficulty in a royal family, numerous itself, and with several collateral branches that bid fair to rival the parent stem, is the naming of each fresh addition to their family circle so as to secure sufficient distinctiveness. Another is, the natural desire to reproduce names already honourably worn by those whom death has snatched away. Perhaps royalty never condescends to consult the popular taste in this matter, except we regard the eighty-five names recently given to a scion of the royal house of Spain as an illustration; on the principle, that if you give names enough to your child you are sure to please somebody. But whether or not the royal family ever thought of the popular sympathy with them in their sorrow for that illustrious man so recently snatched from our midst, we have no hesitation in saying that the name given to the second heir to the throne—ALBERT VICTOR CHRISTIAN EDWARD—will be generally received with unqualified pleasure. It embraces the names of both sire and grandsires, the masculine form of the name of Her Majesty, is distinctive, and not too long.

The *Court Circular* was too formal and precisely decorous to tell us how human nature, both mature and infantile, peeped out from under the robes of royalty at the christening. But jealously excluded, as the reporters were, from the Queen's private chapel, they have yet picked up two pieces of gossip which will prove of universal interest. On the arrival of the Princess of Wales, who looked pale and excited, Her Majesty arose and affectionately kissed her; and the same motherly reception was given to the Prince of Wales. But babies will

be babies, whether royal or plebeian, and have little notion of the proprieties. When the ceremony began, the clear voice of the Archbishop was heard in every part of the chapel. Presently another voice arose; at first but faintly, and then waxing both loud and shrill. Albert Victor, muffled up in a robe and cap of Honiton lace, a cloak of crimson velvet lined with ermine, and a mantle of white satin, began to ring out, not responses to the primate's questions, but a strong and vigorous protest against his own present uncomfortable position, and the whole proceedings which had made him its chief personage. In vain were the blandishments of the nurse, and in vain also the coaxings of the Queen,—the infantile scream re-echoed through the chapel. The primate raised his voice; the baby-prince did the same—both contending with each other for the victory. It was not until Albert Victor had been taken clean out of earshot that the supremacy of the Church and State was restored. The incident occasioned no small amusement to the spectators, but greatly embarrassed for a time the royal party.

We noticed in the long list of names given in the *Court Circular*, that certain ladies and gentlemen were present at the ceremony by special invitation. These were the former governesses and tutors of the Prince of Wales. That they should not be overlooked in a pageant of this sort, bespeaks a laudable desire on the part of the Prince to gratify those who cannot but feel a deep personal interest in his welfare. We think this augurs well for the future.

We may also take this most favourable occasion of renewing our good wishes to the royal pair who, in our judgment, seem to have been so unfairly thrust into the background during this royal christening. That their infant son may deepen their mutual love, and grow in stature and in wisdom, and in favour with God and man—is the devout prayer of every reader of this Magazine. Nor can we omit this opportunity of repeating our expressions of undiminished attachment to Her Majesty the Queen. We have wept with her over the bier of her husband. We now most heartily rejoice with her in the broadning circle of her children's children. May it mercifully please an all-wise Providence through this means to dissipate the sorrow that yet casts its dark shadow over her heart!

CONCERNING GOOD-FRIDAY.

THERE is a closer connection between the principles and the practices of men than appears to shallow observation. In small as well as in great matters we may see how intimately faith bears on character; and it is sometimes useful to us to bring our ruling convictions to the light of every-day life,—thus testing solemn truths by trivial occasions, and drawing from our most familiar experiences the confirmation or the correction of our fundamental beliefs. A man's Theism, a man's Christianity, a man's Protestantism, will run through his whole life; and it may be a salutary exercise occasionally to test the purity of the fountain by examining the character of the stream,—the soundness of the tree by analysing its fruit. This I propose to do, with reference to some of our distinctive principles as Protestant Dissenters, in the present paper.

The Easter holidays have come upon us; and the preparatory fast which introduces them has once more passed away. "Good," or "Holy" Friday received its customary observance, no doubt. In England, it was, as usual, a universal holiday. Little boys and big boys, old men and old women, went about the streets crying their immemorial cry—

"One a penny, buns,
Two a penny, buns;
One a penny, two a penny,
Hot cross-buns!"

The theory which finds embodiment in the "hot-cross bun" is a very comprehensive one. It is, first, that Good-Friday is the anniversary of the crucifixion of our Lord; secondly, that that anniversary should be celebrated by all Christian people by abstinence from work, by solemn fasting, by spiritual humiliation, and by devout religious exercises. This year, it so happened that Good-Friday fell on the same day as the feast of the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary, which is a great festival, not only in the Romish but also in the English Church. Whether our ritualistic friends sacrificed the feast to the fast, or the fast to the feast; whether they made the Virgin do homage to the Son, or the Son to the Virgin; whether they forgot the pathos of the crucifixion in the ecstasy of Gabriel's benediction, or *vice versâ*, is a question which I am totally incompetent to answer; though, if they were sincere in both services, I confess I cannot perceive how they would find it possible to reconcile the joyousness of the one with the sorrowfulness of the other! For my own convenience, however, I will forget the coincidence to which I have referred, and regard Good-Friday in its ordinary and independent aspects. In Rome, as is but natural, the day is observed with much more of ecclesiastical ceremony than in the Church of England. The Pope adopts every possible sign of abasement. His throne is left vacant. He casts aside his robes of state. The cardinals imitate his example, by pulling off their rings for the day, and dressing themselves in purple. The bishops pull off their rings, and put on black stockings. The mace is reversed. The crucifix is unveiled, and the Pope takes off his shoes on approaching it, and then kisses it. The bells are silenced; but the shops, public offices, museums, and picture galleries, are open as usual, and the general tone of the people is not less frivolous and sportive than on common occasions. The observance of Good-Friday, in our own country, was, in the old Catholic days, externally, more poetical, if, intrinsically, no more salutary. "A dressed figure of Christ, mounted on a crucifix, was carried by priests round the altar, with doleful chants; then, laying it on the ground with great tenderness, they fell beside it, kissed its hands and feet with piteous sighs and tears, the other priests doing the like in succession. Afterwards came the people to worship the assumedly dead Saviour, each bringing some little gift, such as corn and eggs. There was finally a most ceremonious burial of the image, along with the 'singing bread,' amidst the light of torches and the burning of incense, and with flowers to strew over the grave." The Reformation put an end to this style of ceremony, of course; but the Church of England still regards Good-Friday as a sacred day, and professes to observe it as a solemn fast. Dissenters of all denominations profess not so to regard or observe it; and the Baptists have long been distinguished by the frankness and the consistency with which they have abstained from doing homage on special days to special events connected with the Christian history.

In our own time, there are not many Dissenters who refuse to accept

the holiday which the law has given them on Good-Friday, though such holidays were strongly protested against by our nonconforming forefathers. Even Robert Robinson, of Cambridge, with all his geniality and benevolence of nature, did not take so liberal a view of this feature of the question as is now commonly adopted, though his judgment is summarised in a sentence which thousands of very good Christians, and very sound politicians, too, will be willing this day to endorse. He says—"As to holidays, let the poor take as many as they can afford, and their masters can spare. Far be it from us to wish to abridge their liberty, or diminish their little enjoyment of life; but let us not make religion of their gambols, nor enrol their pastimes among the laws of Jesus Christ." We, without thinking it necessary every year to renew our protest against the theory on which the observance of Good-Friday is upheld, save by our abstinence from special religious services on that day, take glad advantage of the holiday; and we walk the fields if the weather be suitable, or avail ourselves of the opportunity of some pleasant social reunion, or at any rate leave our secular pursuits for such enjoyments as may be within our reach. It is even possible that our children have heard of the "Hot-cross bun," and that we do not deny them a share in that peculiar and universal indulgence; but the spiced cake is associated in their minds with no particular religious memorial, and its consumption certainly does not take the form, in any sense, of an act of piety.

Now, those pietists who advocate the celebration of particular days, I am willing to admit, do so on the principle that the practice is a useful method by which the soul may periodically remind itself of the facts which are most directly connected with the interests, the laws, or the conditions of its salvation. Assuredly no true Protestant would think of setting up the fast of Good-Friday or the feast of Christmas as a test of grace. The most which will be said in favour of such services is that they are a suitable means to a desirable end. Even the compilers of the Book of Common Prayer admit that "the keeping or omitting of a ceremony, in itself considered, is but a small thing." They further protest that the ceremonies which they retain "are retained for a discipline and order, which, upon just causes, may be altered and changed, and, therefore, are not to be esteemed equal to God's law." It is possibly in this sense, that a liberal and enlightened Churchman will understand the twentieth article, which declares that "the Church hath power to decree rites or ceremonies;" that is, as rites or ceremonies have not the authority of a Divine law, but may be changed from time to time as is convenient, the power of appointing such changes is vested in the Church itself. There are very few clergymen of our day, however, who would take such a view of this question; and the majority of them would give to Good-Friday an equal sanctity with the Sabbath, and would pronounce a non-observance of it to be an act of profane rebellion, or of ungodly heresy. And, more or less, the entire temper of the Prayer Book, and the whole system of Church practice, support this assumption. Dissenters, on the contrary, adopt precisely the opposite principle. Let me endeavour briefly to show the difference more in detail, and to bring the contrary theories to the test of experience in this specific development of them.

In the first place, then, the Church of Rome and the Church of England alike maintain the authority of rites and ceremonies which are not appointed by God's Law: *i.e.*, which have the warranty neither of Scriptural precept or precedent to justify them. Protestant Dissenters, on the other hand, recognise no day as sacred, and no ceremony as incumbent, which has not been Divinely instituted. Which, judged by the test of experience, is the sounder principle? Surely, the latter. The former involves assumptions which cannot be sustained, and which carnal human nature is certain to challenge. Take the case of Good-Friday, for example. The Church cannot enforce the doctrine of its sanctity without committing itself to the theory that it is actually the anniversary of the crucifixion; and that is a theory which cannot be sustained without an infinitely greater degree of mischief from disputation than any possible amount of good which can be derived from the establishment of the fact. Now it is beyond a question that the time of Christ's birth has never been decided; and the date of his crucifixion is even more uncertain. The Church has been disgraced by the divisions and debates which have arisen from the attempt to settle the dates of these occurrences; and those branches of the Church which persist in maintaining the one date or the other, are responsible, not only for the disreputable scenes which took place centuries ago, resulting in persecution and bloodshed, but for keeping open a controversy which must, in the very nature of things, be perpetual. These are responsibilities from which Dissenters are entirely free. They have the express declaration of Scripture that Christ arose from the dead on the first day of the week; and that is the only *date* to which they attach any sanctity. They do not say to the world—"*This* is the day on which the Lord of Glory was put to death;" they, therefore, do not get into any squabble with the world on the question whether or not it *is* the day. They do not insist on *one* day whilst another branch of the Church insists on another: thus presenting to the whole world the very unseemly spectacle of a quarrel about a date among those who profess to sanctify dates before they have agreed upon the dates which are to be sanctified. They are content to know that God has not put his seal upon the date by recording it among the facts of his revelation; and they pledge their homage to no consecration which is not by his direct appointment. When, therefore, the world, rebuked by the Church for its heedlessness to Good-Friday, triumphantly retorts upon the Church, "*Prove the date!*" the reproach of that retort does not fall on us; and we stand between an ambitious hierarchy and the ordinary race of mortals, the protectors of our religion from the discreditable and unjustifiable pretensions of the one, and the vindicators of it to the common sense of the other.

There is another aspect in which this subject may be regarded, however, and one which possesses, in my view, a much deeper interest, tested by which our principles receive a still more emphatic ratification. A ceremonial religion is almost necessarily one of special anniversaries. Any theory which converts a sanctity into an artifice will inevitably perish, unless the artifice itself be elevated into a regular and special custom. The whole economy of Catholicism has been framed on the assumption

that human nature is incapable, even under that help of the Spirit which the Father hath promised to all his children, of a radical, essential, and prevailing spirituality; and the services of the Church, therefore, have been appointed in elaborate harmony with its weaknesses. Salvation, grace, truth, have, according to that system of combined sacramentalism and sacerdotalism of which, be it respectfully spoken, Good-Fridayism is a characteristic development, no inherent power over the heart and conscience of man; so he must be bound down to piety by a number of mechanical and material expedients. Regeneration, accomplished by God's own simple agency, is impracticable through the stolid hardness of the soul; so it must be accomplished by an external process and with a parade of ecclesiastical force, in a baby; and then when the baby becomes a man, he may be told not to commit sin, *because* he is a child of heaven—in precisely the same spirit as the children of the Queen are told not to laugh or play in public, *because* they are born to royal dignities! The means of grace are all mechanicalized and materialized in the same fashion. Counting beads, saying prayers, observing ordinances, and celebrating days, are all parts of a method of being pious without piety, and devout without devotion. The ritualistic Christian is persuaded that the world would forget the incarnation if Christmas went out of fashion; the crucifixion would soon be buried in oblivion if it were not marked in the almanack, and memorialized once a year; the resurrection would lose its moral import if Easter should be permitted to lapse. Incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection, are such momentous incidents in the great drama of time, that they should be perpetually kept in mind by the world. And how is this to be done? Obviously by fixing the date of each, and insisting on the celebration of its annual recurrence as a duty incumbent on all those who desire everlasting salvation! Such is the reasoning which is common alike to the Anglican and the Roman Catholic; and it is acted upon until almost every day in the year has its special interest for the soul. The entire calendar is booked for some essential sacrifice or some consecrated indulgence. Indeed, some days are, as we have seen, dedicated to antithetical experiences; so that the saint stands in peril of a loss of grace unless he laughs with one side of his face whilst he cries with the other, and unless his worship be a mixture of woful groanings with ecstatic songs. These are feats which would hardly be within the power of a ventriloquial pantomimist; but the "Church" imposes a still harder task upon its devotees. The discipline it enjoins is not ceremonial only. That materialism of which I have spoken is absolute. A man cannot be sad unless he sigh, and he cannot sigh unless he fast; he cannot rejoice unless he sing, and he cannot sing unless he feast. His highest pieties and his grossest animalism are indissolubly connected together, according to these High-Church theories. Soul, after all, is but another word for stomach; and those of the old time, whose "god was their belly," could not have been quite so bad as they were represented. So it comes to pass that the true saint is called upon now and then to starve and to debauch on the same day. He goes without his breakfast, or at any rate contents himself with a "hot cross-bun," in homage of one event which makes sacred

the 25th of March; and he rejoices in a magnificent luncheon in homage of another event of an utterly different character. Thus throughout the year he passes from one extreme to another, abstaining at one time and over-feeding at another; converting temperance into an affliction to-day, and into a crime to-morrow; now sulkily enduring all the deprivations of Lent, and anon plunging into all the wild and impassioned gaieties of the Carnival.

Need I point out how thoroughly different from all this is the doctrine of divine living held by us? We teach and believe a much higher notion of what is man's duty to God, and of what is God's claim on man. We do not positively assert that fasting is a mistake, or that feasting is a sin; but the true method of fasting we hold is to avoid ostentation, and quietly to resort to abstinence from the joys of sense that the authority of the soul may have a better opportunity of realising itself. Fasting, with us, therefore, becomes a part of private, secret, resolute, responsible self-discipline, and is not a church-rite at all. Baptism is not adopted as a device for impressing the mind with its higher obligations, but a simple act of obedience, interpretive of trust in, and devotion to, the Saviour. Our forms and services of worship are not tricks adopted with the idea of artificially sustaining an impracticable sanctity, but the exercises of our spiritual culture—exactly what we call them, "means of grace." In our fastings and our prayers, we put the soul in training for its immortal tasks. And, with us, religion is not the duty of the hour, or of the day; it is the eternal life of the Divine conscience within. We cannot, therefore, say,—"This is Good-Friday: now let us think sorrowfully of the stupendous transaction of Calvary;" or, "This is Easter: now let us rejoice in the fact that Christ is risen;" any more than we could say, "Good-Friday is gone: I have done with the melancholy catastrophe of the Cross for one year!" or, "Easter has passed away, and I may come down from the exaltations of my revealed immortality to make the best I can of the present world." Incarnation, Crucifixion, Resurrection, are to us more than historical phenomena; they are Divine revelations of infinite purpose and everlasting import. They are not events to be ceremonially memorialised, therefore, so much as truths to be received into the very heart, and principles to be acted upon through all the vicissitudes and in all the associations of our earthly career, and by which our eternal experiences will be regulated and controlled.

Again, then, I am willing to test these two opposing systems of spiritual polity (if I may so speak) by actual experience. Let it be granted that the great ecclesiastics who uphold the one, really regard ceremony as a means towards the enforcement of the spiritual truth acknowledged in it; the anniversary, as a means towards impressing the great fact commemorated thereby, in all its awful import, upon the mind. We maintain that the expedient is a blunder, and that the effect is exactly the reverse of that contemplated by the arrangement. The arguments by which ceremony and sacrament in spiritual discipline are upheld, are exactly the same as those by which idolatry in worship is justified. God is invisible, and the common mind of mortal man cannot realise the thought of his

presence or his power, unless he be embodied in some significant form; therefore engrave an image, and set it up, to remind the people that the Great Eye watches them, and that the Great Arm may be raised against them in their wickedness. Had I space, I could extend this parallel almost indefinitely; showing how, just as the principle of idolatry once admitted, the multiplication of gods takes place, until the very idea of God is crowded out of the mind; so the principle of sacramentalism once admitted, the multiplication of sacraments becomes inevitable, until vital spirituality is altogether out of the question. But I have said enough for my present purpose; and now nothing remains but for me to apply the argument. I ask the question, then, whether the great event of the crucifixion of our Lord, in all that it implies as to the natural condition of our race, and in all that it reveals as to the method and the law of its everlasting salvation, is not more profoundly revered, more clearly understood, and more practically honoured by those who religiously abstain from observing Good-Friday, than it is by those whose religion consists in the observance of it? I ask the question; but I must leave the honest judgment of my readers to furnish the answer. Alas! I dare not too boldly appeal to the contrast between *our* piety and that of those from whose customs we hold aloof, and whose principles of spiritual action we disapprove; and, even if I dare, the contest would be an unseemly one. Rather will I appropriate as our perpetual prayer the words which Keble has given us as the special voice of Good-Friday:—

"Lord of my heart, by Thy last cry,
Let not Thy blood on earth be spent;
Lo, at Thy feet I fainting lie,
Mine eyes upon Thy wounds are bent:
Upon Thy streaming wounds my weary eyes
Wait like the parched earth on April skies.

"Wash me, and by these bitter tears,
O let my heart no further roam!
'Tis Thine by vows, and hopes, and fears,
Long since!—O call Thy wanderer home;
To that dear home, safe in Thy wounded side,
Where only broken hearts their sin and shame may hide."

DISAGREEABLE PEOPLE.

THERE are such in the world. Not a doubt about it. The reader has frequently met with them. There are various classes of men that one instinctively dislikes. The less we have to do with them the better. Civility and toleration are all that we can render them. They put charity to a severe test—they make large demands on forbearance.

Were any author enterprising enough to write the natural history of disagreeable people, it would not be difficult to find him a few specimens. The names, manners, and habits of these worthies might soon be brought together. For example. There is Mr. Viper. His maxim is to think as ill of others as he can, and to speak accordingly. Calumny is his delight. He loves to sting you with mean insinuations and despicable suspicions about your friends. Excellen-

cies he hides; defects he magnifies to almost any extent. You refer in terms of commendation to certain persons, but he shakes his head ominously, and declares that if you knew them as well as he does, you would think differently. "No better than they should be" is a phrase often on his lips. You praise a sermon, which he admits to be a good one, but assures you that the best things in it were borrowed. You tell him what a bargain you met with the other day at a book-stall, and he informs you that you have been "taken in," for he has seen the same volumes, better bound, and in excellent condition, offered at nearly half what you gave. There is Mr. Pompus. He thinks none like himself. No matter what you talk about he insists upon thrusting on you his own wonderful sayings and remarkable doings. He walks as if he were nothing less than a king, and gives his opinion about this and that as though the whole world were waiting, in breathless suspense, to hear his tremendous verdict. There is Mr. Cant. He always wears the blandest of smiles, he has the sleekest and smoothest of faces, he rubs his hands with the utmost complacency, and bows half way toward the carpet when he enters the room. You never see him without having unpleasant reminiscences of Uriah Heep. There is Mr. Crossgrain. His nature is as contradictory as possible. He invariably opposes people. Whatever subject you mention, he is sure to raise objections. "I don't think so," "I differ entirely with you there," "I can't see it." These are phrases with which his lips are well familiar. Controversy is his paradise. He wears continually a pair of intellectual boxing-gloves. Were he in Parliament he would invariably be found on the opposition benches. There is Mrs. Screw. She drives economy mad. Hoarding is her "being's end and aim." At her house you feel that you are in an atmosphere of penuriousness. If she asks you, at dinner or tea, to "take a little more," it is certain that she means exactly what she says, and only wants you to have "a *little* more." She never forgets to get ready sixpences and fourpenny-pieces for collections. The poor children are kept on what is vulgarly called "short commons;" and it is a curiosity to see the amount of patching, darning, turning, and transformation in general, to which the boys' jackets and the girls' frocks are subjected. There is Miss Voluble. There seems no end to her power of talk. Her tongue is condemned daily to "hard labour." She has never done conversing, and if circumstances compel her to give it up for a while, you may rest satisfied that, like tales in magazines, it is "to be continued in our next." She seats herself by your fireside, unfastens her bonnet-strings, takes off her gloves, arranges her dress, and forthwith commences her prattle about every one and every one's affairs.

But we need not enlarge. The above are simply samples of the human merchandise brought, wholesale and retail, into the great market of social life. Other specimens will readily suggest themselves to any one who will pause for a few minutes and enumerate his circle of acquaintances. Unquestionably we all know, too well, men and women to whom we cannot but apply the term "disagreeable people." There is much in them that we never have liked and never shall. Their absence is more desirable than their presence. When they come, we wish they were gone: when they are gone, we wish they had not come.

Samson found honey in the carcase of a wild beast. Wise men, in like manner, will manage to discover "good in everything." Let us do this with our present topic. There are some plain facts about it which we shall be the better for remembering. Here is one: *disagreeable people often have disagreeable circumstances.* There are exceptions, but experience convinces us that this is the rule. Unpleasant persons usually have unpleasant surroundings. When, for example, you called on Peter Peevish the other day, he was abominably

snappish, was he not? Perhaps worse, in a towering passion. Well, may-be he had just received the news of a bad debt. He had opened a letter from the solicitors of Messrs. Dupe, Swindle, & Co., informing him that a meeting of the creditors would take place at a special time. This being the case, is it fair of you to make comparisons between your beautifully even and unruffled temper and the perturbation of Peevish? How should *you* like similar tidings to those which he received?

The reader must not suppose from these remarks, that we favour the miserable heresy that man is the creature of circumstances. To some extent he is, but never to *such* an extent as to excuse vice and sin. Indeed, it is the glory of true manhood that it makes circumstances its creatures, swims against the stream, makes its way onward in spite of opposing wind and tide. Those who are perpetually fretting and whining at their unfavourable position, instead of bravely attempting to conquer its difficulties and lessen its vexations, deserve the irony of Mr. Carlyle when he speaks of an acorn being nursed into a cabbage, or a cabbage-seed into an oak, by favourable or unfavourable influences of soil and climate! Man the creature of circumstances! Napoleon was not when he said, "There shall be no Alps," and carried his vast army over those perilous heights of snow and ice. Saunderson, the Cambridge Professor of Mathematics, was not when, although stone blind, he delighted large audiences by his lectures on the laws of light. Carey, Marshman, and Ward were not when, in the face of lay and clerical antagonism, they took the Gospel to the heathen, and lifted up the Cross where hitherto it had been a stranger.

At the same time, it cannot be denied that we are all more or less influenced by circumstances. Silently and gradually our characters are affected by the places in which we dwell, the occupations which we pursue, and the people among whom our lot is cast. It is almost certain that nine out of every ten good and reputable men owe much, in a moral point of view, to the situation in which Providence has been pleased to put them. Otherwhere they would be otherwise. There was great wisdom and piety in the words of that old Puritan divine who, when he saw a wretched creature led to the gallows, said, "There goes John Bradford but for the grace of God!"

These facts ought to teach us a lesson of charity toward those who err. A man or a woman goes wrong grievously; we condemn the sin, talk about it,—alas! perhaps half gloat over it, if the offender is an enemy of ours. But while we thus reprove let us bear in mind that the circumstances surrounding the evil-doer have most likely been such as would have affected us quite as unfavourably had we been placed in them. "The graceful vase that stands in the drawing-room under a glass shade, and never goes to the well, has no great right to despise the rough pitcher that goes often, and is broken at last." It is very striking and touching to see how the Saviour, in his messages to the seven churches of Asia Minor, makes allowance for them on the ground of exceeding temptation. "I know thy tribulation and poverty," "I know where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is." If a like charity dwelt in our hearts, we should deal less in unsparing rebuke and more in kindly aid to the sinful than we now do.

> "The look, the air that frets thy sight,
> May be a token that below
> The soul has closed in deadly fight
> With some infernal fiery foe,
> Whose glance would scorch thy smiling grace,
> And cast thee, shuddering, on thy face."

Again, *disagreeable people do not always know that they are such.* To wit: how much Mr. Pompus annoys you! You seldom spend half-an-hour in his

company without feeling that his egotism is unbearable. His self-conceit is insufferable to every one but—himself. It is not at all insufferable to himself. Numbers of people marvel how ever he can make such a fool of himself; he, however, is not one of them. He would be astonished that any one should think of such a thing. He is in "blissful ignorance" of the fact that he has undue admiration of and confidence in himself. Equally unacquainted is he with the vexation which his vanity causes in his circle of friends. Love is said to be blind, and certainly self-love is doubly blind.

Now, if it is possible for men to be so miserably mistaken about themselves, we shall do well to take good care that we do not, at least to such an egregious extent, fall into this error. To have a mistaken opinion about anything is undesirable, but specially baneful is a false view of one's self. Let a man think too little of himself, and he will be timid. He will go through life apologising for intruding himself in the world. Hat in hand, as it were, he will be continually begging some one's pardon for imagined offences and defects which exist only in his fancy. Cowardly when he had need be brave; irresolute when occasion demands stern decision; ever led and never leading,—he will, in all probability, end in being a sycophant and a sneak. Let a man, on the contrary, think too much of himself, and he will be a social nuisance. He will elbow his way into places for which nature has never fitted him, and annoy people who just tolerate his presence from selfish considerations. He will disgust you with coarse manners polished over with false politeness. He will tread ruthlessly on his neighbour's toes,—and, in fine, render himself universally obnoxious. What, then, is the part of wisdom? Seeing that such evils flow from self-ignorance, we should strive to know ourselves, taking mental, social, and moral measurements of our characters. Can we do this? Yes. The inspired Book is "a glass" wherein we may behold ourselves. Divine truths are weights and measures by which we may discover how far we are "found wanting." They should not be neglected.

Of course there is danger here. Self-examination is a thing which some abuse greatly, and to their own hurt. As it is physically, so spiritually. Just as there are pitiable hypochondriacs who feel their pulses, look at their tongues in the mirror, mark first this symptom and then that, wander from one medical practitioner to another, try every old and every new system of medicine, talk of nothing but their "old complaint," and brood over their real and supposed maladies until they are nervous almost beyond the power of endurance, so there are religious hypochondriacs whose experience is very similar. They have acquired a morbid habit of thinking about themselves, which makes them a misery to every one around them. You never go to see them without hearing a doleful account of their doubts and fears. Their "evidences" are always defective, and they are afraid that they will be "castaways." The truth is, that they have so completely fostered the practice of looking at and thinking of themselves, that they are now the victims of chronic religious nervousness. Into such an absurd and mournful extreme, however, none of us need go, nor should such cases prejudice us against a duty which solemnly devolves upon all. We are bound to know ourselves. No one ought to sail on the solemn sea of life, leading to the awful and illimitable ocean of eternity, with a vague and indefinite knowledge of the course which he is steering. Consider the interests at stake, and it will be seen to be inexcusable to the last degree.

Take a third fact. *Disagreeable people do not become such all at once.* Mr. Viper, for instance, was not always as malignant in speech as he is now. He says infamously slanderous and uncharitable things about his friends and neighbours. A few years ago, however, did not see him so spiteful. Had you known him when he was fifteen or twenty summers younger than he is to-day,

you would be astonished at the difference. The portrait of his character then and the likeness of it now, if they could be painted, framed, and hung side by side, would look like those of two distinct persons. He was flagrantly wronged on various occasions. Real injury was inflicted upon him. He allowed this gradually to sour his mind, until it has made him what he is. Step by step he went down the road of Slander, until he arrived at and became an inhabitant of the well-populated city of Backbite. Therefore, when I think of Viper, let me take warning. It is dangerous to cherish a single bad thought or one evil feeling. Feeble as we may conceive it to be, little though it seems, it will, if allowed a residence in the soul, develop itself into action. Inward sin becomes outward transgression with astonishing rapidity. This is finely brought out by our Lord in one of his parables. Discontent dwelt in the Prodigal's heart. But it could not dwell there silent and alone. It soon found words for itself. "Give me the portion of goods that falleth to me." Nor was that all. The wish and the words speedily led to something more. "Not many days after, the younger son gathered all together and took his journey into a far country." "Not many days after," that hidden evil of yours, my friend, will show itself to your fellow-men, unless you assail it vigorously and slay it promptly.

We have thus been speaking and moralizing about divers unpleasant folk with whom, ever and anon, we are compelled to associate. But is it not true that *in some respects we all are disagreeable people?* Even though we may be Christians, it is possible for us to have certain attributes of character which we should be better without. A man may be building on the foundation Jesus Christ, and yet mix much "wood, hay, stubble," with the "gold, silver, precious stones," wherewith he builds. The saintliest have defects. Little rents and flaws disfigure the noblest robe of righteousness. In all of us there are angularities that want smoothing down, stains that require rubbing out, blots that should be removed. Look honestly into the matter, and you will not be long before you make the humiliating discovery that *your* name is in the category of disagreeable people. Each of us is disagreeable to some one and in some way. The remedy? We need not give a lengthened reply. The remedy is this,—God's presence, God's truth, God's Spirit.

Poetry.

"BLESSED ARE THEY THAT MOURN."

O, DEEM not that earth's crowning bliss
Is found in joy alone;
For sorrow, bitter though it be,
Hath blessings all its own:
From lips Divine, like healing balm,
To hearts oppressed and torn,
This heavenly consolation fell—
"Blessed are they that mourn!"

As blossoms smitten by the rain
Their sweetest odours yield—
As, when the ploughshare deepest strikes,
Rich harvests crown the field;
So, to the hopes by sorrow crushed,
A nobler faith succeeds;
And life, by trials furrowed, bears
The fruit of loving deeds.

L.

Reviews.

Divine Compassion; or, Jesus Shewing Mercy. By James Culross, A.M., author of "The Resurrection and the Life; or, Lazarus Revived." London: J. Nisbet & Co.

The author of this delightful little book is comparatively little known south of the Tweed; but we may safely predict that this obscurity will not last long, if he continue to enrich the church with such works as this, and the one which is associated with his name on the title-page. They are the kind of books which are sure to tell; not second-hand echoes of the thoughts of others, nor elaborate dressings-up of commonplace thoughts in high-sounding words; but fresh, natural, outspoken utterances of a vigorous, reflective, and poetic mind, which has been sedulously improved by culture, and which is thoroughly imbued with the knowledge and spirit of the Scriptures. We are sure such books must win attention and regard for their author, and believe they will also (and this, we are sure, he will deem their only real success) draw forth afresh the hearts of their readers in adoring love to Him whose glory they are intended to set forth.

We could have wished that the title had been a little more distinctive in its indication of the character of the book; that some clause or phrase had been introduced which should specify that the volume is not a treatise, but a series of expositions of scenes from the life of Jesus. Mr. Culross evidently possesses that rare endowment,—a gift for expository teaching. Too frequently those who attempt this work begin by pronouncing a divorce between the head and the heart: and so we have either the vapid and interjectional reiteration of the commonplaces of religious sentiment and emotion, all feeling and no thought; or, on the other hand, mere dry, soulless, verbal and textual explanation. Here we have no such putting asunder of the things which God has joined. Every page of the volume before us shews the result of study and scholarship; but Mr. Culross has attained the happy art of giving results, without laying bare the processes by which those results have been reached. The author has an eye, too, for the deeper meanings of the Word of God. Never fanciful in his interpretations, he is never slavishly and superficially literal. You feel that his mind has become, by long and loving study, *en rapport*, if we may venture on the phrase, with the mind of the Bible; the sacred volume opens its secrets to him, talks with him "as a man speaks with his friend." Add to these qualifications the possession of great reflective power, and of no small share of the poetic faculty; a memory stored with the choice words of the best thinkers and speakers, and ready and apt to produce its treasures for use; quickness to discern, and courage to point out, the bearing of the words and incidents of Scripture upon the phases and tendencies of modern life; and a heart glowing with love and worship for Christ, and burning with desire to recommend him to men;—and we think our readers will acknowledge that we have pretty nearly all that is required to fit a man for the task of expounding the Scriptures to his fellows. The faults we could find would be very slight and few, and having to do with style only; such as the occasional use of uncouth and unusual words where a common one would have served the turn equally well. The general style of the book, however, is as good as its matter,—clear, vivid, and picturesque,—and with a terseness which often packs a whole sermon into a single sentence.

We perhaps ought to indicate more in detail what are the subjects treated of in this volume, and to furnish one or two specimens of its thought and manner, to whet the appetite of our readers. Mr. Culross selects as illustrations of "Jesus shewing mercy," his treatment of Nicodemus, of the woman of Samaria, of the man born blind, of the woman that was a sinner, of the little children, of the rich young man, of Peter, and of the dying thief. From the second of these expositions we cull two specimens,—not as the best, but as

more easily than some others bearing to be parted from their connection. The former may serve in a general way to justify our commendation of the book; the second is an illustration of the author's mode of applying the narrative with which he deals to present life and practice:—

SALVATION SATISFYING.

"Now Jesus tells us two things here about his salvation. First, it satisfies the soul. Having received it, we are freed from the cravings of unsatisfied, imperious desires, that almost *burned* within us, and we thirst no more. The spell of sinful delights is broken; the enticements that drew us hitherto are unloosed; and we find in God all that our largest wishes crave. And what calm, tranquil hearts there are, testifying to the truth of this statement; hearts that go singing all the day, 'Thou hast given me beauty for ashes, and the oil of joy for mourning;' hearts that would not exchange what they have found in Christ for the whole world; hearts that have returned into their rest; and into which the immortal satisfactions of God are already poured. 'The ransomed of the Lord return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing flee away.' I have seen the joy dawning in a desolate heart; as when a stream of warm sunshine pours into a cold and cheerless room, when once the shutters have been opened and the blinds drawn up, enlivening and gladdening it. If any one is still athirst, it is the fault (as Bengel remarks), not of the water, but of the man. It is true, and may not be denied, that restlessness, discontent, sourness, covetousness, ambition, are to be found, to some extent, even among those who have tasted the water of life. But the explanation lies in that word 'tasted;' they are not drinking, but only tasting. Even the tasting has made them other than they were: what would it be if they did but drink to the full! And some good men (I hardly like to call them saints) have even made it a matter of conscience to repress all gladness, as if a cheerful face were a sin; and, out of principle, have gone to heaven girded with sackcloth and wearing a look of gloom. 'Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him for ever:' but they have tried to glorify *without* enjoying him. It was their sin: their religion *would* have made them happy if they would have let it; *did* make them happier than they seemed to be; there was joy deep within them which the mere onlooker knew not of, and which they themselves did not like to confess.

"A second thing Jesus tells about his salvation. It is in the receiver like a springing well; he is no more depending on pleasant surroundings; it is as if a well of life were opened within him, springing up in grateful, holy, joyful, loving thoughts and aspirations, never dried up, flowing all the year round, flowing eternally. Flowing eternally, because the soul is in living communion with the fountain of life. What beauty and fruitfulness are thus imparted to the soul! What trees of righteousness and flowers of amaranthine bloom, grow beside these heavenly waters! I remember wandering one hot midsummer day among brown moorlands and bare hills that looked as if swept by fire, and suddenly coming within sight of a little spot of green, with a slender thread of verdure winding down the slope; and when the place was reached, there was a well, clear as crystal, in a cup fringed with brightest green, full to the brim, the water leaping up in its heart through the dancing sand, and running off in a little stream to deliver its 'tribute wave' to a neighbouring river. There were no tall trees nourished by its side; but what vegetation the soil was fitted to produce (broom and heather and grass, and sweet moorland wild flowers, and things that love 'the scent of waters'), it had gathered in living beauty round its margin. So is it when this fountain of living water is opened in a human heart. 'The wilderness is glad, and the desert rejoices and blossoms as the rose.'"

THE HIDDEN CONSCIENCE.

"'Thou art a prophet:' the exclamation shews how her sins have flashed up before her. There is still a conscience there, for all her deep sinning; and Jesus has reached it. And let us not forget that there is still a conscience left even in the bosom of those who have learned to sin without blushing. There is a subject which of late years has been engaging the attention of Christian philanthropy, and which indeed demands it, for hitherto, through a shame which is not altogether that of purity, it has been kept too far away:—Is there hope for the fallen in our streets? Now, I wish to say that Jesus ever found a conscience in the fallen, as he did in this woman; and so may we. The poor lost sister, once a beautiful and radiant child, playing at hide-and-seek with her little brothers, standing at her mother's knee, and looking up with a long steadfast look into her face to hear some marvellous story; the young Joy of the house, so full of sweet wiles and witcheries, 'with ringing voice and clear blue eye, and clustering curls of sunny hair,'—but who has stooped to utterest shame, and whom society has flung off with loathing, gathering up its skirts and scowling on her approach, to whom even the home of her childhood is a Paradise Lost,—oh, disciples of the holy Jesus, the blessed seeker of that which was lost, there is still a conscience there, unextinguished, immortal, for all her deep sinning! Leave her not: tell her of our God who will abundantly pardon: cry to her aloud, *Turn; for why wilt thou die?* Behind the scorn and recklessness of her bearing, there is still a conscience to appeal to; there is still a witness for God amidst the wild passions that, like devils let loose, rage and stamp and howl within the chambers of her breast. That comes out sometimes in very terrible ways. I open a newspaper and read how, one winter night, (it is no strange story), a woman that was a

sinner threw herself from one of the bridges into the Thames, and was taken out a corpse.

"'The bleak wind of March
Made her tremble and shiver,
But not the black arch,
Nor the dark-flowing river:
Mad from life's history,
Glad to death's mystery
Swift to be hurled,
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The subject of this volume is one, the importance of which cannot be overrated. Home-training is the seed from which, in every sense, the harvest of life grows. Exceptional cases are, undoubtedly, often to be met with, but, like all exceptions, they prove the rule. The family is the true basis of society, and the home is the true safeguard of social morality:—the "social evil" is, in by far the largest number of cases, the bitter fruit of an unhallowed home-life. We all know, too, that the home is the cherished hope of the church, since by far the largest number of its sons and daughters come from thence. It is very interesting to notice how many illustrations of family-life we have in the Bible. The family was an institution of Paradise. Family relationships were sacredly guarded by the Mosaic law. Examples of the blessedness of the pious training of children abound, while there are also some examples of the lamentable effects of parental unfaithfulness. In all these things the Bible is still our unerring guide. If, too, we consult the history of the past, we cannot fail to be struck with the extraordinary influence of home-piety on the leaders of the faith in all ages of the church. From the earliest fathers, down to our own day, the stream of testimony is an unbroken one; and it seems to us that, of all agencies for good, the most blessed and the most sure is that of the Christian training of children. Of course we do not forget the necessity of Divine influences, but we also do not forget that the largest and most unlimited promises are made to parental piety and faithfulness. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it," is both a precept and a promise, claiming our obedience and confidence on the same grounds of Divine faithfulness and love as the injunctions to believe the Gospel in order to be saved. The book before us, on all the points to which we have adverted, is a valuable repository of sound principles and apt illustrations. Our space forbids quotation, but we would point out, as specially noteworthy, the chapters on the formation of character, family worship, and the Lord's day at home. There are also some sweetly touching sentiments, both of sorrow and comfort, in the chapter on "The Breaking up of the Home." Our thanks are due, both to the Tract Society and to the author, for the publication of a book for which we bespeak a wide circulation.

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Christian Cabinet.

LIGHT-HOLDERS.

Every voyager through the British Channel will remember the famous lighthouse that stands near the gates of the Atlantic. It rises from a rock in the midst of the waves; its beacon-blaze streams far out over the midnight sea. The angry waves, for many a long year, have rolled in—thundering against the tower's base. The winds of heaven have warred fiercely around its pinnacle; the rains have dashed against its gleaming lantern. But there it stands. It moves not, it trembles not; it is founded on a rock. Year after year, the storm-tossed mariner looks out for its star-like light as he sweeps in through the British Channel. It is one of the first objects that meets his eye as he returns on his homeward voyage; it is one of the last which he beholds after his native shores have sunk beneath the evening wave. On the base of its tower is this inscription: "*To give light and to save life.*"

That tower of Eddystone is a Light-Holder to all who come within its range. It does not create light, it only sheds it, and "giveth light" to every passer-by on his watery way. This image of a lighthouse may have been in the apostle's mind when he wrote to the Philippians of the surrounding heathen and idolators, and said to them, "Among whom ye shine as lights in the world." Some translate the word *torch-bearers*. Others hold that it refers to stars in a dark night. All the interpretations look to the same idea, viz., that *Christians are Christ's light-holders to their fellow-men.*

The lantern of a lighthouse is not self-luminous. It has to be kindled by a hand from without itself. By nature, every Christian is as unfitted to give spiritual light as the empty tower on Minot's Reef or on Sandy Hook would be to guide the mariner at midnight. God creates the natural power, the mental faculties, as the builder rears the stone-tower of Eddystone or Sandy Hook. Neither natural heart nor stone-tower are self-luminous. A hand from without must bring them light.

Conversion by the Holy Spirit is a spiritual illumination of the soul. God's grace lights up the dark heart. Sometimes suddenly, as in the case of Paul. Sometimes, as in the case of John Newton, there is at first a feeble germ of light, like the little blue point of flame on a candle-wick, and this germ of light grows into a clear, full blaze. The beginning of true religion is in the first acts of sincere penitence—the first breathings of earnest prayer—the first hungerings after God—the first honest attempt to do right and to serve the Lord. God's grace, remember, is the only original source of the light that makes any man a luminary in society. And when a man has once been kindled at the cross of Christ, he is bound to *shine.*

And, in order to do this, he need not be conspicuous in society for talents, wealth, or intellectual culture. The modest candle by which a housewife threads her needle shines as truly as does the great lantern that burns in the tower of a city hall. A humble saint who begins his day with household devotions, and serves his God all day in his shop, or at his work-bench, is as truly a light-holder as if he flamed from the pulpit or illuminated a theological class from a professor's chair. To "shine", means something more than the mere possession of piety, or the enjoyment of piety; it is the *reflection* of Gospel-religion that makes the *burner.*

Martin Luther was an Eddystone-tower to bewildered Europe. On the other hand, the humblest tract-visitor or mission school-teacher is a lantern-bearer to guide some lost wanderers toward heaven. Harlan Page, the pious carpenter, never talked with a person for ten minutes without saying something to benefit his soul. He was a steady burner. Thomas Dakin, a poor pensioner of Greenwich Hospital, distributed over one hundred thousand tracts every year, and when at last death smote him down suddenly, his pockets were found filled with tracts entitled "Are you prepared to die?"

If every Christian who trims his lamp and keeps the oil of grace up to its full supply is such a blessed benefactor to others, what a terrible thing it is for a Christian to let his light go out! A traveller who once visited a lighthouse in the British Channel said to the keeper, "But what if one of your lights should go out at night?" "Never," said the keeper, "never—impossible! Sir, yonder are ships sailing to all parts of the world. If to-night my burner were out, in a few days I might hear, from France or Spain, or from Scotland or America, that on such a night the lighthouse in the Channel gave no warning, and some vessel had been wrecked. Ah, sir, I sometimes feel, when I look at my lights, as if the eyes of the whole world were fixed on me. Go out! Burn dim! *Never, sir, never!*"

How closely this incident comes home to us all! Perhaps in eternity I may hear that some precious soul was wrecked, because my pulpit was not a faithful light-holder to my congregation. Some Gospel-burners were neglected and grew dim. One man, perhaps, stumbled into a drunkard's grave, because I did not warn him soon enough against the peril of the first glass. Another broke God's Sabbath for want of keeping the fourth commandment trimmed and burning. Before another was not held up the exceeding sinfulness of sin; and Jesus, the light of the world, may not have been set forth aright to wandering sinners. "Go out—burn dim!" God help me to say, "*Never*—NEVER!"

I know of certain households in which I fear the lamp is out. That boy would not be seen so often on his way to the theatre, or the drinking-saloon, if father and mother held up the torch of loving warning! That giddy daughter, who was once thoughtful about her soul, might now be a Christian, if there had been a light-holder near at hand, to guide her to Jesus! There was a lamp of profession in the house. It *did not shine*. The oil was out. Love of the world had extinguished it. That dark lantern left the house in midnight.

Thank God, some lights never go out. Death cannot quench them. They shine for ever. Luther's great lantern, "*The just shall live by faith*," still gleams from Wartburg Castle. John Bunyan's lamp twinkles yet through the gratings of Bedford gaol. Old John Brown is still lighting ten thousand fugitive footsteps to liberty. Pastors, parents, teachers, may be called home to heaven; but, like the good mother of the story, they "set a light in the window," to guide souls to the mansions of glory.—*Rev. T. L. Cuyler.*

OCCUPATIONS FOR THE EVENING.

THE close of each day should bring over the soul some shadow of solemnity and rest. A sacred time, even in Eden, was "the cool of the day." Isaac went out into the field to meditate "at eventide." Jesus often left his disciples about sun-down, and wandered up among the Syrian hills, to find some sequestered spot where he might feel himself alone in the full presence of God. The breeze that fanned the leaves of Paradise will touch our cheek, and make coolness at the close of our day, if we will but cease from care and sin. The same sun shines and sets on us which lightened and left the patriarchs day by day so long ago. The same night shadows us that gathered around the Saviour of the world. And the same soul rest will be ours if we seek it "when even is now come."

We read in the Scriptures that day and night are the "ordinances" of God. Can any one suppose that he has established them for only *material* ends? To preserve the balance of the heavens, to promote the growth of vegetables, to give sleeping time to man? These are ends every way worthy of God; but surely a higher end is found in the trial, nurture, and purification of *souls*. The day is for their labour; the night is for their rest. The day is full of hard tests and severe exactions; the night soon returns all soft and dewy, with refreshing again. This is not so by necessity. Alas, there are thousands of busy men who pass this "quiet resting place" and never see it. They seem not to know that it is "the shadow of the Almighty," the silent footstep of his nearer presence. But to many a one the evening is a daily deliverance and salvation, a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. And is there any sufficient reason to make the evening not so much to you? If God has placed you so in his providence, that

you *cannot* have it in quietness for meditation and prayer, then he will compensate you for the loss. You shall be no loser by doing your duty. He will nourish your soul by other means, and give you rest in other ways. There are not a few who are in this predicament, to whom the evening is but the prolongation of the day; who *must*, in strength or weariness, hold on at the task until it is done; who must, late as well as early, stand in their place, or see it taken by another. Ah, but think! Is it certain that this is your case? Rather, has not God, to a large extent, put the matter into your own hands, and *you* are arranging it so? *You* are killing each evening as it comes, shutting out its softness by unnecessary toil, startling its silence with music, spending it, as the phrase is, always in company. By your present plan of life you may be getting much, but are you not losing more? You are enriched, as you hope for good, by the gains of your trade; pleased and informed with the conversation of the friends you meet; solaced and stimulated by the sweet strains you hear. But the evening will not thus be a "quiet resting place," will not come to your heart with whisperings of the far-off world to which you are going, with airs from the better country, with soft-falling dews of heaven! Fitly, therefore, we may ask you to think whether it would not be well at least to intersperse labour and social delights with seasons of calm reflection! For you have to remember that God will not compensate you in his providence for what you thus wilfully lose. You can make quietness if you will for a longer or a shorter time at the close of the day. You can make, as it were, a little enclosure of time within which your soul shall have a deeper thoughtfulness and a more conscious rest. Behold, God himself makes that enclosure for you; you have only to enter it. He draws you away from toil; he drops the twilight upon your path, and then shadows you with the wing of night. And as the sun is setting, as the air grows cool, and as the night draws on, how temple-like are earth and sky! How near is the great presence! Hear you not then the still small voice—softer than sound of brooks, more musical than summer wind among the leaves—calling you to come into higher relations and holier life? To a devout soul the evening is like "the secret place of the Most High." It is "the shadow of the Almighty." It is a closet of which God builds the walls and shuts to the door. It is a "quiet resting-place," in which the soul may soothe weariness, recruit strength, look on the face of purity, and grow up into the image of God.

Think, then, as the evening comes round—for thought is the soul's rest—think of the day that is gone with gratitude, for every hour of it has been overflowing with the goodness of God; with penitence, for you will easily discover that it has been a day of shortcomings and sins; with wisdom, aiming to understand it better than when you lived it; with tenderness and holy fear, as feeling how good and how grand a thing it is to be permitted to live on, and to hope to live better.

Think of to-morrow, which will come so soon, with its unknown and yet probable events; of the task that will await you then; of the persons who will be around you, of their words, their looks, their influence; of the peril you will have to brave, of the weakness you will feel, of the strength you will need, of the failure you fear, that by your thought and prayer it may be the less likely to come; and of the goodness which will certainly enrich and crown to-morrow, as it has filled and now closes to-day.

Think of the evening of life itself, of the vanishing of all mortal things, of the shadow that death will cast, of the soul's departure through that mysterious shade, of the morning on the other side, of the sunless city, the cloudless skies, the stormless shores, the happy multitudes, the swelling songs, the wonder, the rapture, and the rest. Think any such thoughts with prayer and faith, and your soul *must* be lifted at least somewhat above the dust and drudgery of this vexing and down-dragging world; must be drawn away from its cares and defilements; and as you grow stronger and happier among these superior things, you will say gladly, "The Saviour has led me to-night into one of his quiet resting-places; this is the rest and this is the refreshing wherewith he causeth the weary to rest."—*Rev. Alex. Raleigh.*

Christian Activity.

THE BAPTISTS IN GERMANY.

In our last paper we furnished an account of the origin of the Baptist cause in Germany, and a sketch of the Hamburg church. We proceed now to supply further details of the work God has carried on through our brethren during the last thirty years.

Within three years from the formation of the church in Hamburg, churches were established at Stuttgard, Berlin, and other places. Mr. Oncken was specially invited to Stuttgard by one Dr. Römer, an intelligent gentleman who had heard of the new sect, and desired to know something more of them. During a single visit he administered the ordinance of baptism to twenty-three persons.

Of the Berlin church we must give a lengthened notice. Its pastor, the Rev. G. W. Lehmann, is well known in this country; and wherever he is known he is regarded with that esteem and affection which his character and labours so richly deserve. Mr. Lehmann was a Christian many years before he became acquainted with Baptist views. He was born of godly parents, and was blessed with their pious counsel, example, and prayers. He attended also the ministry of the late Johannes Gossner (Father Gossner), who was engaged in Berlin preaching the Gospel and training missionaries. Together with several others, he began to feel uncomfortable in connection with the Prussian State Church, on account of its many departures from the way of truth, and the evils it cherished. Uniting themselves, therefore, in close fellowship, they met regularly for prayer and mutual instruction; still attending the public services of Gossner's church. Thus they had continued for some years, when Mr. Oncken, having heard of them, sought them out—met with them in their prayer-meetings—and endeavoured to teach them the way of God more perfectly. Of course he was not silent on the subject of baptism. After a prayerful perusal of the Word of God, Mr. Lehmann, his wife, and three or four others, saw that the baptism of the New Testament was the immersion of believers and that only; and they resolved to attend at once to the neglected duty. Consequently in the summer of 1837 they were baptized by Mr. Oncken; and a church of six members was organized, of which Mr. Lehmann was chosen teacher. In 1840, Mr. Lehmann came over to this country to obtain the fraternal recognition of British Baptists; and was ordained to the work of the Christian ministry. The service was conducted in Salter's Hall Chapel, London; and the ministers who officiated were Messrs. Murch, Dyer, Groser, and Hinton. It was hoped that this English ordination would secure for Mr. Lehmann a higher respect for his ministerial character, and freedom from annoyance and opposition. He did not, however, long escape the punishments which both Church and State united in visiting upon those who ventured to preach the Gospel in forms not recognized by law. To the appeals which were made on his behalf it was answered, even by men well known as friends of evangelical truth, that if the Baptists were tolerated, every species of dissenting faith, and even infidelity itself, must be allowed; and that thus piety would become extinct, and Christianity be destroyed. By reasoning like this the most odious violations of religious freedom were vindicated and justified in Berlin; and that too by theologians and philosophers whose virtues and learning have filled the world with their fame. For several years, Mr. Lehmann, although discharging all the duties of pastor, continued the pursuit of his secular calling, as an engraver and lithographer, till at length the American Baptist Missionary Union undertook his support. At first the church met in the pastor's private house; but the landlord interfered, and they were obliged to seek another place of meeting. They hired a room, paying £50 a year rental; but even here they continued to suffer much annoyance. Still, in spite of all opposition, God prospered them. In 1841 there were only twelve members; twenty years

after they reported five hundred and sixty-three. A neat and commodious chapel, capable of seating about six hundred persons, was opened with much rejoicing on the 10th of November, 1861. In May of the following year, the Berlin church celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of its formation. It was amusing to hear Mr. Oncken recount on that occasion the stratagems he had to resort to in the early period of the church's history, to get into Berlin and to stay there a few days without falling into the hands of the police. "But now," said he, "we are in this beautiful chapel, protected by the same police that formerly persecuted us, and there is none to make us afraid. At that time there was only a small band of about a dozen baptized believers; now there are six hundred, and between fifty and sixty flourishing stations around, like so many lighthouses, from which the truth shines forth into the darkness. Truly the Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." In addition to other efficient helpers, Mr. Lehmann is assisted by his son, who was educated for the ministry at Regent's Park College, London; and who, from his talents and earnestness, promises to be a worthy successor of his excellent father.

About the period that Mr. Lehmann united himself to the Baptists, another man, who has been of great service in the cause, was brought to a knowledge of the Lord's will. We refer to the Rev. Julius Köbner, now pastor of the Baptist church at Barmen and Elberfeld, on the Rhine. Mr. Köbner was born in Denmark, of Jewish parents. He was led to believe in Christ through the instrumentality of Mr. Oncken, at Hamburg. Some years ago the Baptist Tract Society published a short, but interesting account of his conversion, written by himself, from which we make the following extracts:—"When I began to think seriously, I knew not one Christian man. Early in life I began to feel that my religion was an unhappy one. Jewish children are taught to use written prayers, but they do not understand the meaning of them. I soon felt how miserable it was to read unknown things out of a book before God. I saw that Christians around me knew what they were accustomed to read and sing in their services; and I began to think that their religion must be more reasonable than mine. But I knew nothing of their religion itself. One idea, however, I learned was, that Christ was both God and man; and this idea soon became very precious to me. I secretly, in my heart, felt the necessity of loving God. I felt the wretchedness of a situation without God, and that it must be delightful to love him. I wished to love him, but I could not." In this state of mind Mr. Köbner continued till his removal from Denmark to Germany. "Now it was," he says, "that I became acquainted with Christ as the Lamb of God, and soon I was united with those who professed the Christian faith. But there were still some things wanting. I believed that I was a sinner, and I looked to Christ as my Saviour; but still I had not felt the deep and utter depravity of my own heart. More than one year, and perhaps two or three, passed, before I came to this knowledge. But the great God who had commenced his work in me, also carried it forward. I now became acquainted with our dear brother Oncken, and from his mouth I for the first time in my life heard a sermon which convinced me I was such a sinner as could find no rest till at Christ's feet. From this time true repentance took place in my soul. I felt the bitterness of sin, and Christ became precious to me, as the only way to God. Thus, in God's own time, after having been immersed as a believer in Jesus, I became a member of the true church of God; being received into the Baptist church at Hamburg. I afterwards became a minister of the Gospel in that church, and it has been my joy to preach *that* Christ who was crucified by my forefathers, not only at Hamburg, but in missionary tours through various parts of Germany." Mr. Köbner is a man of considerable culture, of much poetic power and feeling, and great devoutness. He is the writer of many hymns used by our German brethren in their "service of song;" and is the author of a long dramatic poem entitled "Die Waldenser," which has been received with favour by critics and literary men.

Messrs. Oncken, Lehmann, and Köbner are the three ruling minds of the Baptist movement in Germany. Their brethren gladly acknowledge their lea-

dership. They have wrought together for many years with singular unanimity. By their combined wisdom, zeal, and love, they have preserved peace in the churches, and extended the mission. They have succeeded in infusing their own spirit largely into their younger fellow-labourers; so that nothing strikes an observer more than the absence of all petty rivalry, and the readiness to sacrifice everything for the common cause. There are many other honoured men in connection with the work, who have endured great hardships and done exploits; the future historian of the German Baptists will have to write of their sufferings and their deeds; howbeit they have not attained to the first three.

The growth of the Baptist body in Germany has been most marvellous. It has attracted the attention alike of friends and foes. It has not resulted from transient excitement. There has been no wild fanaticism. The disciples have not swam with the stream of popular opinion. They have not enjoyed the patronage of men in power. They have had no rich or learned men among themselves. Though their sky is brightening, they may even now adopt with slight modifications the apostle's description of himself and his fellow-workers,—"Unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place; and labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day." And yet, in spite of all this, the world has witnessed no such development of the Gospel since apostolic times. In 1840 there were four churches containing about two hundred members. At the Hamburg conference last year it was reported that there were seventy-four churches, having a membership of nearly eleven thousand three hundred; and that the Gospel was preached, in connection with these churches, by one hundred evangelists and colporteurs, at about eleven hundred stations. During the last three years, nine new churches have been formed, three hundred and twenty-seven preaching stations opened, and four thousand six hundred and fifty-eight persons baptized. The present field of labour includes Germany, Denmark, Norway, Poland, Lithuania, Russia, Prussia, Austria, Hungary, Wallachia, Switzerland, and France. The labourers may be found among the mountains of Silesia, in the low flat districts of Friesland, on the shores of the Baltic, in the Swiss valleys, amid the beauties of the Rhine, and on the waste places and rocky islands of Scandinavia. In royal cities, such as Copenhagen, Berlin, and Vienna—in large sea-ports, as Bremen, Hamburg, and Memel—in manufacturing towns, as Barmen and Elberfeld—in agricultural villages and remote districts thinly inhabited—*everywhere*—these sowers go scattering the seed of the Kingdom. They are busy in times of peace, and busier in times of war. While we write, ten missionaries and colporteurs, besides other brethren, are at work in the midst of the contending armies in Schleswig. They visit Danes, Prussians, Austrians, all alike. Fifty thousand copies of the four Gospels and the Epistle to the Romans, have been issued for distribution among these hundred and fifty thousand soldiers. "We have circulated," says Mr. Oncken, "a hundred and thirty thousand tracts in different languages among them, twenty-five thousand single Gospels, and *sold* upwards of six thousand Testaments. Our success has far exceeded my most sanguine expectations." Thousands of these soldiers, more particularly the Austrians, are Roman Catholics. Who can tell how God may use our brethren for their enlightenment, and then use them in their turn to enlighten their countrymen? It is thus he makes the wrath of man to praise him, and overrules the worst calamities for the greatest good.

Since the commencement of the German Baptist Mission, upwards of thirty thousand persons have been converted through its instrumentality and added to its churches, twenty-five per cent. of whom had formerly been adherents of the Church of Rome. Besides these, many have been brought to a saving knowledge of Christ, who have not identified themselves with the mission. It has circulated nearly one million copies of the Word of God, in different languages, and upwards of twenty millions of evangelical tracts and books.

Between two and three thousand persons, formerly in communion with its churches, have emigrated to America, Africa, and Australia; and, carrying the Gospel with them, they have in many cases formed Christian churches in the land of their adoption. A large number have gone to receive their heavenly reward.

The above glorious results have been realised, as we have previously shewn, in spite of much opposition. We are aware that the persecutions of our German brethren have been frequently represented as nothing more than the penalty of the law on political offenders. Protestant Germany does not like to be considered persecuting. Our own press has sometimes circulated continental misrepresentations. A few years ago, the Berlin correspondent of the *Times* said, "It is usual to represent the obstacles thrown in the way of Baptist missions in Germany as a religious persecution; but this is a mis-statement which cannot be too rapidly cleared up in the interests of the Baptists themselves." The teaching of the missionaries has been spoken of as directed against State churches, whereas they only teach that no man is a Christian who has not been born again by the Spirit of God. It has been all along asserted that the Baptists are disobedient to the authorities; whereas they only disobey the authorities when to obey them would be to disobey God. Let one example suffice. A soldier in Mecklenburg was converted. He longed to tell others of the newly-discovered Saviour, and the peace of believing on him. He began to speak of his inward joy. Orders were issued by his military superiors forbidding him to distribute tracts, to take part in any religious service, or even to associate with the pastor of the church to which he belonged. He could not in his conscience obey these commands. He was, therefore, sentenced to six weeks' imprisonment; part of the time to be spent in a dark dungeon, on bread and water. When the Government was petitioned to mitigate the sentence, they refused, saying that he was imprisoned, not for his religious convictions, but for disobedience to his military superiors. To say that this was not persecution is to say that there was never any persecution from the beginning of the world to this day.

Volumes might be filled with stories of the trials that have been endured. We could tell of meetings for worship interrupted, and the worshippers either dispersed or conducted to prison—of persons forbidden, on pain of fines and imprisonment, to have religious worship in their houses—of others incarcerated for circulating the Scriptures—of children taken from their parents by the police that they might be sprinkled, and the parents compelled to pay the fees—of fines imposed for administering baptism, and singing and praying at funerals—of the authorities refusing to marry because the applicants were Baptists, and forbidding them to be married by their own ministers—of goods distrained, and furniture, and clothing, and bedding, and even the cattle and goats which supplied the children with milk, sold by public auction—of blows, stripes, stoning, and bloodshed. Where measures have not been so severe, the brethren have been compelled to give notice to the police prior to the formation of a church—they have been obliged to obtain certificates of recognition—they have not been allowed to hold their meetings during the hours of service in the National Church—books and pamphlets full of the foulest calumnies and the grossest falsehoods have been written against them—they have been glad to meet in upper rooms with closed doors, and to administer the ordinance of baptism by night in secret ponds surrounded by reeds and bushes.* Sometimes pious magistrates have refused to execute the laws enacted against them; bearing, at the same time, honourable testimony to their fidelity. "The Baptists," said a magistrate of this description once, "are governed best by kindness. You cannot compel them. They will maintain their cause with their life."

The persecutions of which we have written have been generally instigated by the clergy. In this the Lutheran church has only carried out the teaching of Luther. He says in the introduction to his Catechism, the catechism

* In the Hamburg Zoological Gardens there is a large pond, now well stocked with fish and aquatic birds, and surrounded by evergreens, in which, prior to the formation of the gardens, Mr. Oncken frequently baptized by night. It was then a wild place.

now in use in Germany, that all who will not learn it shall be given over to the devil, and that the prince shall expatriate them. It was the clergy who commenced to persecute Mr. Oncken. "My head," said a Hamburg ecclesiastic, "shall not rest till this sect is destroyed." High-Church Lutherans, like Dr. Stahl, deny that ours is baptism at all, and profess to ground their opposition on that. Evangelical men, like Dr. Krummacher, say that we make too much of baptism, and profess to oppose us on that account. Men violently opposed to one another in other matters, have been agreed here. As Herod and Pilate became friends to dishonour our Lord, so these parties have united in the attempt to crush his followers. In all their proceedings we have seen the persecuting spirit and tendency of State Churches. Thank God, better times are coming for Germany! There are some parts, Saxony for example, where even yet no Baptist assemblies are allowed. In Mecklenburg, the hostility of the law is still maintained. In Bremen, however, and Lubeck, and the Grand Duchy of Oldenburg, and Wurtemberg, and Prussia, and Russia, a much larger measure of religious liberty is enjoyed than formerly; while in Hamburg there is the fullest freedom. A wondrous change has come over the church there. One of the Hamburg senators once said of Mr. Oncken, "This fellow has given us so much trouble, that he deserves to be quartered, and then burnt." Now, "this fellow" is esteemed and honoured by all who know him, in Church and State. His congregation is the only Baptist congregation in Germany empowered to hold landed property, or whose marriages and registrations are of legal value. They have as much religious freedom in Hamburg as we have in England.

Our readers would like to know something of the doctrinal views and ecclesiastical polity of the German Baptists. They take the Word of God as their sole guide in all matters of faith and practice. Nothing impresses a stranger more than their profound reverence for the Bible, and the way in which they make their constant appeal to its teaching and authority. At the same time they have found it useful to draw up and publish a "Glaubensbekenntniss," or, "Confession of Faith," which is accepted by all the churches. It has fifteen articles, embracing all the great points of Christian belief and duty; and all its statements are supported by texts of Scripture given in full. This confession is thoroughly orthodox, and very similar to the declarations of doctrine and discipline made among ourselves. The churches observe the Lord's Supper on the first day of every week. They practise the kiss of charity. They require all their members, however feeble and poor, to labour for Christ. They have been accused of attaching too much importance to baptism; so far, however, from this being the case, they excluded the church at Stuttgard from the Union, because that church had imbibed such sentiments. Sunday schools are connected with most of the churches, if not with all. Young Men's Christian Associations have also been formed in connection with several; as at Hamburg, Berlin, and other places. All the churches are grouped into Associations, and in this capacity assemble annually for business; while the Associations are formed into the German Baptist Union, and meet in a Triennial Conference in Hamburg. They have solved most satisfactorily the problem which seems to us British Baptists insoluble; namely, how can a number of independent Baptist churches maintain their independency, and yet co-operate as a united body for denominational ends? We might, to our advantage, take a leaf out of the book of our younger brethren.

The churches are chiefly poor—very poor; but according to their means they are liberal. There are very few that can give much to the support of the ministry. The church at Hamburg is not a rich church; yet the brethren there raised £375 in 1859 for religious and benevolent purposes; and in 1861, when Mr. Oncken came over here to solicit aid, on account of the failure of the usual help from America, the Sunday before he left, his people contributed nearly £100 for the work of the mission: "their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality."

One of the great secrets of the success of the German Baptists, under God, has been individual effort. The churches have been gathered in the

midst of persecution and hate, and the members who compose them are men whose faith is fired by a burning zeal. The laymen, scarcely less than their pastors, early commenced of themselves the labours of missionaries among their countrymen, and these labours they have ceaselessly pursued to the present time. In all their journeys, whether of business or of pleasure, in all their intercourse with their fellow-men, they have everywhere asserted the unchartered freedom of the conscience; while at the same time they have sown the precious seeds of heavenly truth in the minds of the people. The testimony of the fathers of the mission is this, "We could never have succeeded as we have, but for the co-operation and individual labours of the members of our churches." It is pleasant to see how they are occupied on the Lord's day. Instead of yielding to a spirit of self-indulgence, as too many professing Christians do, they go out to work for Christ. Some distribute tracts; others visit the sick; others teach in the Sunday school: all find something to do for the Master. And so the work has gone on. It has been from the beginning, in an eminent degree, a self-progressive mission. It has been sustained in a great measure by the friends it has gained, and extended solely by the converts its own doctrines have made. Amidst the contempt of ecclesiastics and the persecution of rulers, it has been honoured by God as the means of signal blessings to the people, and has raised up in the heart of a powerful nation a band of converts and resolute believers in the simple doctrines of the Gospel, who, undaunted by opposition, will still labour to extend among their countrymen and over continental Europe the precious faith they have received.

Next month we shall complete this brief record of the work of our brethren in Germany, with a sketch of the origin and growth of Baptist principles in Denmark, and some general remarks on the importance of rendering increased pecuniary aid to the mission, and the encouraging prospects which the future discloses to our view.

Words of Wisdom for Christian People.

TRIFLES.—A WORD TO MARRIED PEOPLE.

The ringing of the door-bell has a pleasant sound to me, especially in my idle moods. Like an unopened letter, there is a mystery about it, and one waits with a pleasurable excitement to see who or what is coming.

Returning home one day earlier than usual, I found my wife had gone out; and while lounging idly over the paper, the bell rang. I waited expectant till Bridget appeared with a note, containing a request from my old friend, Dr. Stearns, to ride out to his residence in the country the next day to transact some business that had been long pending, and an invitation to bring my wife and spend the day. I was pleased; first, because I wanted the business completed; and secondly, because I thought I needed a day's recreation.

But the next morning everything seemed to go wrong. Alice could not accompany me, and I could not get off as early as I wished; and consequently I was peevish and fretful; and Alice reflected my humour, I suppose—as it appeared to me she had never been so unamiable.

At length, however, I drove away, though not in a very pleasant mood. It was a lovely October day; and as I rode along noting the tints of the landscape, memory went back to the golden autumn when I wooed and won my bride. How lovely Alice was then! I thought. And how happy we were! But that was long ago. Yet nature is the same, though we are changed. Let me see; we have been married three years. Is it possible it is no longer? And I felt a pang as I contrasted the past with the present, to think that we could settle down into the commonplace life we now led.

We had no serious trouble; we didn't quarrel; though when I felt cross, or

other things didn't go to suit me, I took no pains to conceal it, and often spoke harshly to Alice, who sometimes replied in the same spirit, sometimes with tears. Yet we were generally good friends. But the charm, the tenderness of our early love, had imperceptibly vanished.

I had become careless about my appearance at home, and Alice was equally negligent. Her beautiful brown hair, which she used to wear in the most becoming curls, was now usually brushed plainly behind her ears, unless she was going out or expected company. I dismissed the subject with a sigh, at the doctor's gate, with the reflection that it was the same with all married people—must be so in fact—for how could romance and sentiment find place among so many prosy realities? I suppose we were as happy as anybody; and yet it was not the kind of life I had looked forward to with so many bright anticipations.

The doctor came out and greeted me cordially. In the hall we met Mrs. Stearns, looking fresh and lovely in her pink muslin wrapper, with her jetty hair in tasteful braids. She scolded me playfully for not bringing my wife, chatted a few minutes, and then flitted away, while the doctor, remarking that his motto was business first and pleasure afterwards, led the way to the library.

As we entered the room, I noticed a vase of bright autumn flowers on the table, imparting an air of taste and cheerfulness to the apartment. I made some remarks about it, to which the doctor responded:—

"Yes, I am very fond of flowers, and love to see them in the house; and as I spend much time here, my wife always keeps a vase of them on the table as long as they last."

Our business was finished before dinner, and we walked out in the grounds, which were not extensive, but tastefully arranged. There was a variety of flowers in bloom, and I noticed that the doctor selected here and there the finest, until he had a handsome bouquet.

When we reached the house, Mrs. Stearns was on the steps. The doctor, still continuing our conversation, gave her the flowers, with a slight bow and smile; and holding up a spray of crimson berries, which he had broken off, she bent her head while he fastened it among the dark braids of her hair. It was a trifling incident, yet their manner arrested my attention. Had I been a stranger, I should have pronounced them lovers instead of sober married people. All through the day I noticed the same constant delicate attention and deference in their deportment to each other.

There was nothing of which the most fastidious guest could complain; yet, while showing me the most cordial attention, they did not seem to ignore each other's existence, as married people so often do.

I had never visited the doctor before, and was very much pleased with his tasteful home. I said so, after dinner, when we strolled out into the woods.

"Yes," he said, "I think it is pleasant;" and he added, "I believe I am a contented man; so far, I am not disappointed in life."

"How long have you been married, doctor?" I asked.

"Ten years."

"Well," I pursued, "can you tell me whence comes the bright atmosphere that surrounds your home? Tell me how you and Mrs. Stearns manage to retain the depth and freshness of your early love, as you seem to do? I should think the wear and tear of life would dim it somewhat. I never saw a home where my ideal of domestic happiness was realized before. It is what I have dreamed of."

The doctor smiled, and, pointing to a thrifty grape climbing over a neat lattice, and loaded with purple fruit, he said:—

"That vine needs careful attention, and if pruned and properly cared for, it is what you see it; but if neglected, how soon would it become a worthless thing! So the love which is to all, at some period, the most precious thing in life, and which needs so much care to keep it unimpaired, *is* generally neglected. Ah! my friend, it is little acts—trifles—that so often estrange loving hearts. I have always made it a point to treat my wife with the same courtesy that characterized my deportment in the days of our courtship; and while I am careful not to offend her tastes and little prejudices, I am sure that mine will be equally respected."

That night I rode homeward pondering the doctor's words, and reviewing the years of our married life, I was surprised at my own blindness, and determined to recall the early dream, if possible.

The next morning at breakfast I astonished Alice by a careful toilet, chatted over the dinner, and after tea invited her to ride. When she came down in my favourite blue organde, with her hair in shining curls, I thought she never looked lovelier. I exerted myself, as of old, to entertain her, and was surprised to find how quickly and pleasantly the evening passed. I resolved to test the doctor's theory perfectly, and the result exceeded my most sanguine expectations. For all the little nameless attentions so gratifying to a woman's heart, and so universally accorded by the lover and neglected by the husband, I find myself repaid a thousand-fold; and I would advise all who are sighing over the nonfulfilment of early dreams, to go and do likewise, remembering that that which is worth winning is worth keeping.

Narratives, Anecdotes, &c.

THE RESCUED BIBLE.

A YOUNG woman, whom we shall call Betsy Bowood, was the inhabitant of a pleasant inland town in the south of Ireland about a century ago. She was a Protestant, and was no stranger to the truth *in theory*, having been early taught, by precept and example, to "search the Scriptures;" but, as yet, Betsy was a stranger to the *power* of the truth in her own heart, and therefore, we may suppose, she fell into that common and often fatal snare, an *ungodly marriage*. She cast in her lot with one who neither knew nor loved the God of her fathers, and poor Betsy soon found time to repent of her sad mistake. Before marriage, her lover had promised much indulgence and liberty, which as a husband he soon ceased to perform; and she found out, *too late*, that "two cannot walk together unless they are agreed," and that one important subject between husband and wife, on which the one commands a silence which the other is afraid to break, will eventually raise a powerful barrier against conjugal love. Betsy loved peace, and for peace gave up much,—*too much*, it seems, for she lost the respect of her husband, when he said that *even to please him* she forsook the house of her God. But this sacrifice was not sufficient,—it was not enough that she should give up the profession of her religion, and the association with those who loved it,—but she saw the brow of her husband darken at the sight of her father's old Bible, so fondly cherished by her, for its own sake, and that of her lost parent: she could now only read by stealth and in secret, snatching a moment from her many household duties, when her husband had gone out to his work, lest she should quite forget the word of her God, whom she loved more in those dark days than in the unshackled freedom of her happy girlhood. One Sunday evening, heavy in heart and broken in spirit, she longed for a refreshing draught from the fount of divine truth, and waited anxiously for her husband to go out to walk with one of his comrades, that she might take her Bible out of its hiding-place, and sit down to read in peace. The weather had been rainy, but it cleared up, and at last she saw him set off (as she thought) for the evening; but he had either suspected her occupation in his absence, or returned for something he had forgotten at home: however, he caught poor Betsy in the act of reading the Bible; and so intent was she on its pages, that she was not aware of his approach till he stood before her with a brow of thunder—and, violently snatching the precious volume from her hands, he rushed out of the house with it, and threw it into a dirty pool close by, the top of which was thickly mantled with the green weed called duckmeat. Poor Betsy was at first so shocked that she was unable to resent this act of desecration;

but as soon as she could recover herself sufficiently to speak, she drew herself up with a quiet dignity that her husband was not prepared for, took off her shoes and nice white stockings, gathered up all her loose drapery as neatly as she could, and then, with a firm step, though pale countenance, plunged into the middle of the dirty pool, bared her arm, and brought up her Bible from the bottom, wiped it in her apron, and then addressing her husband, said, "Now, John, I kiss this blessed book before you, and in the presence of our Judge I promise him faithfully that, do as you will to me, I will never give him or his holy book *up for you* or *any man*. I gave up too much to you already; I gave up my Sabbaths and my sermons, my prayers and my psalms, with the people of God; but I will do so no more: from this day forth I will serve God—and he will take care of his own." Her neighbours, who had gathered round the pair, looked on with astonishment at the wife's courage and firmness, but still more at her husband's quailing and cowed appearance: he was quite unprepared for such a scene, and walked off, having evidently for once met more than his match. "The wicked flee when no man pursueth; but the righteous are bold as a lion." My readers will be glad to hear that not only was Betsy enabled to keep her book, but from that day to the day of her husband's death (many years after) he never again interfered with her religion in any way. She was a good wife, left him no just cause of complaint, attended faithfully to all her household duties—had a smile and a welcome, a neat fireside, and a warm supper always ready for her husband; but she never again forsook the house of her God. He respected her firmness of principle as much as he had despised her former unfaithfulness; and, *the Lord being her helper*, Betsy was able to preserve *the rescued Bible* for her children's children.—*Evangelical Magazine.*

"AND A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM."

A CHRISTIAN wife had for years prayed earnestly for the conversion of her husband. Strong in his pride of intellect and manly vigour, he looked upon religion as a credulity fit only for women and children. The failings or peculiarities of Christians elicited his bitterest sarcasms, and many a tear was wrung from her eyes while his wit was mercilessly used upon some sincere, but illiterate or unpolished follower of Jesus. Her anxiety for this soul, so dear, and in such awful peril, made her own walk and conversation truly blameless.

She had one child, a daughter, inheriting her father's passionate temper. Many and trying were the mother's struggles with her darling, in which love always came off conqueror, for Mrs. Arlington never faltered in her firmness, never lost her sweetness and gentleness of manner. Subdued by love, Essie clung to her with renewed fondness. But while she was yet a little one, and Mr. Arlington still unmoved by her prayers and tears, the exemplary wife and loving mother was removed after a few brief hours of suffering, which gave her no time for last adieus. But although unexpected, the call found her ready. Her house was literally set in order; her lamp was trimmed and burning.

Bereft of one whom he had loved with all the strength of his ardent nature, alone with his grief, the father felt his burden trebled when he folded his daughter in his arms, and strove to beguile her sadness. She did not weep passionately for a time and then forget everything in play, for her mother had been her constant companion and her only playmate; and she now brought all her thoughts and desires to her father with the same artless confidence, making constant and most pathetic allusions to her "dear, dear mamma." Bed-time had been a precious hour to the two, and Mr. Arlington knew it, and fearing Essie might grieve herself to sleep, he went to her room to sit with her. The sweet face, nestled among the pillows, was raised to his with a smile; then a shadow crossed its brightness that stirred memories it was agony to recall,—memories of the meek and patient saint who had borne so much from him for Christ's sake.

"Papa, please read me a hymn," asked the soft voice. "Mamma always used to."

Hymns! how often had he mimicked

the tones of those who had loved their sacred meaning better than they had known how to turn it into pleasing melodies for scoffing ears! But now the child's soul-lit eyes were fixed upon his face nothing doubting, and he read. A sigh of satisfaction fluttered up from the grieved heart.

"Oh, papa, that was the very one mamma liked best; and now, pray."

He dared not; it seemed mockery; but it was hard to tell her his reasons. Essie brushed away a tear, then offered her own simple petition,—a touching one for him to listen to, filled, as it was, with artless yet confident and earnest petitions for his soul. She lay for a time clasping his hand, then broke out in a subdued earnestness,—

"When mamma prayed, she always prayed for you; and when she did," hastily wiping away a tear, "she cried, oh, she *would* cry so! But she doesn't cry now; she is happy now, dear papa, she is happy now;" with a sweet, assuring look into his face, as if she would fain soothe the anguish that shook his frame.

A week passed; at every meal she would slip from her chair, glide round to him, and holding his head down to her trembling bosom, with soft clinging arms, beg him to say grace. Every night, earnestly, yet with wonderful tact, she would strive to persuade him to pray for his "dear little daughter," until at last he assured her that he was trying to learn to pray.

"Essie must not be discouraged about me," he added sadly.

"Oh, no," she answered, "never; I promised mamma not to be. I told her I would ask God every day to make you a Christian; and I know he will do it, for he is so good."

Sublime, childlike faith, to which all things good are granted! Not a fortnight had passed before Mr. Arlington, taught of the Spirit, united the penitent prayers of deep conviction to the child's petitions, and became a Christian. The headstrong spirit of the child had been completely subdued by her mother's death, and both have walked since in such a manner that the ransomed spirit gone before may well rejoice over the change wrought by God's blessing upon her death, untimely as it seemed to human eyes.

"I THOUGHT IT WAS MY MOTHER'S VOICE."

A FRIEND told me not long ago a beautiful story about kind words. A good lady, living in one of our large cities, was passing a drinking saloon just as the keeper was thrusting a young man out into the street. He was very young and very pale, but his haggard face and wild eyes told that he was very far gone in the road to ruin, as with an oath he brandished his clenched fists, threatening to be revenged upon the man who so ill-used him. This poor young man was so excited and blinded with passion, that he did not see the lady, who stood very near to him, until she laid her hand upon his arm, and spoke in her gentle, loving voice, asking him what was the matter.

At the first kind word the young man started as if a heavy blow had struck him, and turned quickly round, paler than before, and trembling from head to foot. He surveyed the lady for a moment, and then with a sigh of relief, he said:—

"I thought it was my mother's voice, it sounded so strangely like it! But her voice has been hushed in death for many years."

"You had a mother, then," said the lady, "and she loved you."

With that sudden revulsion of feeling which often comes to people of fine nervous temperaments, the young man burst into tears, sobbing out, "O yes, I had an angel mother, and she loved her boy! But since she died, all the world has been against me, and I am lost! lost to good society, lost to honour, lost to decency, and lost for ever!"

"No, not lost for ever; for God is merciful, and his pitying love can reach the chief of sinners," said the lady, in her low, sweet voice; and the timely words swept the hidden chords of feeling which had been long untouched in the young man's heart, thrilling it with magic power, and wakening a host of tender emotions, which had been buried very deep beneath the rubbish of sin and crime.

More gentle words the lady spoke, and when she passed on her way the young man followed her. He marked the house where she entered, and wrote the name which was on the silver door-plate in his little memorandum book.

Then he walked slowly away, with a deep, earnest look on his white face, and deeper, more earnest feelings in his aching heart.

Years glided by, and the gentle lady had quite forgotten the incident I have related, when one day a stranger sent up his card and desired to speak with her.

Wondering much who it could be, she went down to the parlour, where she found a noble-looking, well-dressed man, who rose deferentially to meet her. Holding out his hand, he spoke.

"Pardon me, madam, for this intrusion; but I have come many miles to thank you for the great service you rendered me a few years ago," said he, in a trembling voice.

The lady was puzzled, and asked for an explanation, as she did not remember ever having seen the gentleman before.

"I have changed so much," said the man, "that you have quite forgotten me; but though I only saw your face once, I am sure I should have recognised it anywhere. And your voice, too, it is so like my mother's!"

Those last words made the lady remember the poor young man she had kindly spoken to in front of the drinking saloon so long before, and she mingled her tears with those which were falling slowly over the man's cheeks.

After the first gush of emotion had subsided, the gentleman sat down and told the lady how those few gentle words had been instrumental in saving him, and making him what he then was.

"The earnest expression of 'No, not lost for ever,' followed me wherever I went," said he, "and it always seemed that it was the voice of my mother speaking to me from the tomb. I repented of my many transgressions, and resolved to live as Jesus and my mother would be pleased to have me; and by the mercy and grace of God I have been enabled to resist temptation, and keep my good resolutions."

"I never dreamed there was such power in a few kind words before," exclaimed the lady; "and surely ever after this I shall take more pains to speak them to all the sad and suffering ones I meet in the walks of life."

A Page for the Young.

THE WORTH OF COURTESY.

Worthless men are sometimes universal favourites, simply on account of their uniform amiableness and courtesy to others. It is not well to imitate the character of Chesterfield, but it is wise to catch something of his winning manners. We have been repelled from intercourse with good people, and from trading at certain shops, by a coldness and gruffness of manner which were specially uncomfortable. The following story is a good one to point a moral, and as it has the merit of truth, is very suggestive.

A few years ago, on a radiant spring afternoon, two men, who, from their conversation, appeared to be foreigners, stopped before the gate of one of the large workshops in ——— for the manufacture of locomotive engines. Entering a small office, the elder of the two men inquired of the superintendent in attendance if he would permit them to inspect the works.

"You can pass in and look about, if you please," said the superintendent, vexed, apparently, at being interrupted in the perusal of his newspaper. He then scanned the two strangers more closely. They were respectably but plainly dressed, and evidently made no pretensions to official dignity of any kind.

"Is there any one who can show us over the establishment, and explain matters to us?" asked Mr. Wolfe, the elder of the strangers.

"You must pick your own way, gentlemen," replied the superintendent; "we are all too busy to attend to every party that comes along. I'll thank you not to interrupt the workmen by asking questions."

It was not so much the matter as the manner of his reply that was offensive

to Mr. Wolfe and his companion. It was spoken with a certain official assumption of superiority, mingled with contempt for the visitors, indicating a haughty and selfish temper.

"I think we will not trouble you," said Mr. Wolfe, bowing; and taking his companion's arm, they passed out.

"If there is anything I dislike it is incivility," said Mr. Wolfe to his companion, when they were in the street. "I do not blame the man for not wishing to show us over his establishment; he is no doubt annoyed and interrupted by many heedless visitors; but he might have dismissed us with courtesy. He might have sent us away better content with a gracious refusal than with an ungracious consent."

"Perhaps we shall have better luck here," said the other stranger; and they stopped before another workshop of a similar kind. They were received by a brisk little man, the head clerk apparently, who, in reply to their request to be shown over the establishment, answered,—

"O, yes; come with me, gentlemen; this way!" So saying, he hurried them along the area, strewn with iron bars, broken and rusty wheels of iron, fragments of old cylinders, into the principal workshop. Here, without stopping to explain any one thing, he led the strangers along with the evident intention of getting rid of them as soon as possible. When they paused where the workmen were riveting the external castings of a boiler, the clerk looked at his watch, tapped his right foot against an iron tube, and showed other signs of impatience. Whereupon Mr. Wolfe remarked—"We will not detain you any longer, sir," and with his friend took leave.

"This man is an improvement on the other," said Mr. Wolfe; "but all the civility he has is on the surface; it does not come from the heart. We must look further."

The strangers walked on for nearly half a mile in silence, when one of them pointed to a picture of a locomotive engine with a train of cars underneath. It stood over a small building not more than ten feet in height, communicating with a yard and workshop.

"Look," said the observer, "here is a machinist whose name is not on our list."

"Probably it was thought too small a concern for our purposes," said his companion.

"Nevertheless, let us try it," said Mr. Wolfe.

They entered, and found at the desk a middle-aged man, whose somewhat grimy aspect, and apron round his waist, showed that he divided his labours between the workshop and the counting-room.

"We want to look over your works, if you have no objection."

"It will give me great pleasure to show you all there is to be seen," said the mechanic, with a pleased alacrity, ringing a bell and telling the boy who entered to take charge of the office. He then led the way, and explained to the strangers the whole process of constructing a locomotive engine. He showed them how the various parts of the machinery were manufactured, and patiently answered all their questions. He told them of an improved mode of tubing boilers, by which the power of generating steam was increased, and showing with what care he provided for security from bursting. Two hours passed away. The strangers were delighted with the intelligence displayed by the mechanic, and with his frank, attentive, and unsuspicious manners.

"Here is a man who loves his profession so well that he takes pleasure in explaining its mysteries to all who can understand them," thought Mr. Wolfe.

"I am afraid we have given you a great deal of trouble," said the other stranger.

"Indeed, gentlemen, I have enjoyed your visit," said the mechanic, "and shall be glad to see you again."

"Perhaps you may," said Mr. Wolfe, and the strangers departed.

Five months afterwards, as the mechanic, whose means were quite limited, sat in his office, meditating how hard it was to get business by the side of such large establishments as were his competitors, the two strangers entered. He gave them a hearty welcome, handed chairs, and sat down.

"We come," said Mr. Wolfe, "with a proposition from the emperor of Russia."

"From the emperor? Impossible!"

"Here are our credentials."

"But, gentlemen," said the now agitated mechanic, "what does this mean? How have I earned such a distinguished honour?"

"Simply by your straightforward courtesy and frankness, combined with professional intelligence," said Mr. Wolfe. "Because we were strangers, you did not think it necessary to treat us with distrust or coldness. You saw we were in earnest in acquainting ourselves with your works, and did not ask, before extending to us your civilities, what letters of introduction we brought. You measured us by the spirit we showed, and not by the dignities we could have exhibited."

The mechanic visited St. Petersburg, and soon after moved his whole establishment there. He had imperial orders for as many locomotive engines as he could construct. He has lately returned to his own country, and is still receiving large returns from his Russian workshop. And all this prosperity grew out of his unselfish civility to two strangers, one of whom was the secret agent of the Czar of Russia.

Our Sunday Schools.

"BY HIS STRIPES HEALED."

There was once a distinguished gentleman in England, who, cherishing toward the youth around him the benevolent spirit that glowed in the heart of Robert Raikes, gave much time and money to the support of several Sunday schools in his native county and his immediate neighbourhood. In these schools many neglected children and vagrant boys, accustomed to desecrate the Sabbath, had been gathered. Good superintendents had been appointed over them, and they were generally in a thriving condition.

One of these schools, however, had a more than ordinary share of large and troublesome boys; and among these was one ringleader who was particularly unmanageable. Again and again he had broken the rules of the school; the influence of his example was poisoning the minds of the rest, and the superintendent came to the conclusion that the expulsion of this boy from the school was an unavoidable necessity.

Just at the moment when he was about to act upon that decision, this gentleman, the founder of the school, a kind-hearted and noble-looking man, entered unexpectedly.

The superintendent told him at once of the sad duty he was about to perform, and of the mortifying failure of every method employed to reclaim the lad. Forbearance had reached its utmost limit, and the transgressor must, at last, be expelled.

The founder was grieved. His countenance showed the workings of pity. He was sure that if the boy were turned away from the school he would become worse and worse, and that his course would end, probably, in prison or on the gallows.

After a few minutes' conversation he said to the superintendent,—"I know that your sentence is just; you cannot allow the law to be broken down, and the order of the school to be destroyed by indulging the wilful disobedience of any one. I dare not ask you to withhold any longer deserved punishment from the incorrigible transgressor. But one favour, sir, I will ask; let *me* receive punishment as the boy's substitute. Change the form of the penalty, and let me bear what he deserves. I will take off my coat and submit myself to you to receive 'forty stripes save one;' and then will plead for him that he be permitted to remain in the school and have time and space for reflection. Perhaps he will try again, and may God help him to do better."

At this saying the superintendent was astonished; so were all the scholars. The scene was wonderful. There was perfect stillness. Every eye was fixed on the strange spectacle. The objections of the superintendent were overruled by the kind persistency of the man who presented himself to suffer

in the transgressor's stead. There stood that noble-looking gentleman, bowing his back to the smiter for another's sake. The refractory boy, also, like the rest, was greatly surprised. He forgot himself. He seemed to notice no one in the room except the man who was about to suffer for his sake. He remained in his seat motionless, almost breathless, until the lash descended upon the good man's back; then bounding from his place, as by a mighty impulse, he arrested the hand of the superintendent, saying—

"It is enough! I promise to do better. Spare him, sir, and just try me once more!"

He was not ashamed to weep. For the first time manly tears flowed from the deepest springs of feeling in his nature, and they were tears of repentance. The boy was gained over to the right side, and kept his word faithfully.

Who does not see that this noble act of self-sacrifice on the part of this benefactor was truly Christ-like? It was an appeal of love that rent the rocky heart like a lightning stroke. Such is the appeal that comes to the awakened soul from the cross of Jesus. When the eyes of the mind are opened to discern the Sufferer there; when his voice is heard, "It is enough;"—then we know the meaning of the response of Paul, "We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the *atonement*." "By his stripes we are healed."

SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHING TESTED.

A poor woman, during the Lancashire distress, removed to a neighbouring town to live with her daughter. Her kind pastor paid her railroad fare, and gave her a half-crown besides. Reaching her journey's end, a crowd of boys at the station begged to carry her box. She refused, thinking to bear it herself, and save the expense; but one poor lad implored with such a piteous look, stating that they were starving at home, that she could not resist him. He shouldered the box, and carried it to the house of the daughter, who was found to be out upon an errand. The daughter was also found to be straitened with poverty. She had been out trying to get a morsel for the children. She raised her hands on seeing her mother, and exclaimed:—

"O, why have you come? for we are starving for food!"

The mother tried to calm and comfort her; and, drawing forth her purse, gladly remarked:—

"I have here half-a-crown, which will carry us over to-morrow, at any rate."

But imagine her dismay on seeing the half-crown gone, and on reflecting that she must have given it to the boy, in the dim light of the evening before, for carrying her box. This was too much for them to bear. Both women sank down, and cried long and bitterly. The mother, however, was a truly Christian woman, and, when the first burst of sorrow was over, her faith triumphed, and she began to comfort the daughter. She tried to sleep that night on the promise, "God will provide."

Early next morning a boy tapped at the door.

"Didn't I bring a box here last night for an old woman?"

"Yes."

"Where is she?"

"Up-stairs."

"I want to see her. Tell her to come down."

Very soon the mother came down, and was greeted with: "Missus, do you know you gave me a half-crown last night instead of a penny? Because you did, and here it is. I have brought it back."

"Yes, my lad," said the glad woman, "I did, and I am *very* much obliged to you for bringing it back;—but didn't you tell me you were *clemming* (starving) at home?"

"Yes, we are very bad off," said the boy, brightening up as he spoke: "*but I go to Sunday school, and I love Jesus, and I couldn't be dishonest.*"

Teachers in the Sabbath school, be encouraged by this instance; and seek to impress deep upon the young hearts under you the principles of strict, unbending integrity; feeling that this is the only foundation of a virtuous, honourable character among men, and the surest basis upon which to build a devoted, faithful, Christian character, when God's grace shall visit and renew your scholars' hearts.

Our Societies.

THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

With much thankfulness to Almighty God, we are able to make a most gratifying announcement respecting the financial position of the Baptist Missionary Society. If we are not misinformed, and if we are not too sanguine as to the probable receipts between the time of our writing and the close of the financial year, it will be found that the deficiency, which was reckoned so recently at £8,000, has been wholly, or nearly, wiped away. Not only so, but in many parts of the country the regular subscriptions have been increased, so that there is reason to anticipate a considerable addition to the permanent income of the Society. We make these announcements with the utmost thankfulness. It is much to the credit of the executive in Moorgate Street, that they saw so long beforehand the difficulty in which the Society was likely to be placed; nor does it reflect less credit on their courage that they should have made it public at once. The very general and hearty response that has been made to their appeal is equivalent to a vote of confidence, and is of itself a great gain. We hope it will be found that the Society is stronger for good than it has ever been, on account of the painful discipline through which it has passed.

The Annual Meetings of the Society will be held as usual this month. We trust that the attendance of brethren from the country will be larger this year than ever, on account of the sympathy with the Society which has been evoked. The first meeting will, as in former years, be the prayer-meeting in Moorgate Street. The missionary sermons will be preached by the Revs. D. Katterns, of Hackney, and A. M'Laren, B.A., of Manchester. The chair at the annual public meeting will be taken by Lord Radstock. The annual meeting of members will be held as usual on the Tuesday before the public meeting.

We gave in our last a very interesting letter from our friend Mr. Smith, of Delhi. The following letter, which gives further particulars, will be read with much interest. It is dated Jan. 21st:—

"After an absence of nearly three years, myself and family were permitted, in October last, once more to land in safety in Calcutta. We had some severe weather from Port Phillip Heads to Cape Lewin. In one gale we were obliged to lay to for three days, and during that time drifted back 200 miles; yet the Lord brought us and our fine vessel to the place of our destination in safety. I deeply regret to say that she has since been totally destroyed by fire, in the river, when nearly ready to sail, and three men were drowned in their attempt to escape from the burning ship, viz., the first officer and two seamen.

"Since our arrival, I have been much struck by indications of increased energy and life. The activity everywhere visible contrasts most favourably with the apathy and stagnation visible before the mutiny. During our journey from Calcutta we everywhere met with immense quantities of cotton; the roads were perfectly filled with it. The American revolution has had a wonderful effect on India; it has done more in developing Indian resources than the combined labours of all Europeans for the last hundred years. I am sorry to see the spirit of speculation running wild, and especially in Calcutta; the usual result cannot fail to be realised in numerous bankruptcies and injured credit. Nor do I think the almost numberless 'limited companies' formed and forming will answer public expectation. Where any branch of trade requires developing, and the resources for its development exist, I can see great advantages from a combination of men and capital; but when apothecaries and horsedealers, hotel-keepers and merchants, turn their private establishments into limited companies, realising large sums for the good-will of their several businesses, it is easy to see what the end will be. Still anything, in my opinion, is better than the stagnation of former days, when the old Company kept their old stereotyped plans in steady operation, and evidently thought that nothing was to be so much dreaded as change. Now we have rushed to the other extreme, and change is the order of the day—change in army and navy, change in covenanted and uncovenanted civil services, change in land system and tenures, change in law and administration. I might have left the last item out, for I see less improvement in the administration of law than in any other department. The complaints of corruption and delay are as numerous as ever, and the people almost universally curse our courts and